PRIVATE EYE

No. 787
Friday
14 Feb. '92

80p

MAJOR'S MISTRESS

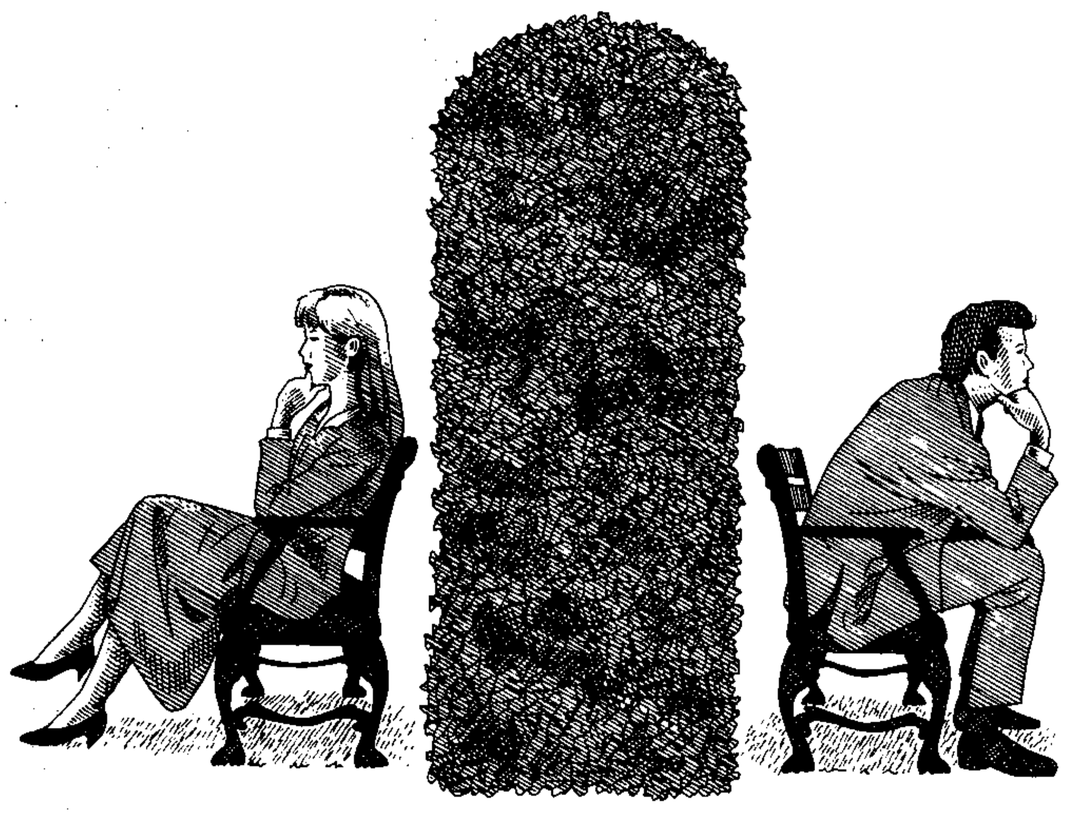
EXCLUSIVE PICTURE

NEW SMEAR SHOCK

YOU COULD TAKE A LIFETIME FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER.

WE MAY HAVE ALREADY FOUND THEM.

Understandably, many people are a little wary of Dateline. Some may feel that it's an admission of "failure" to use a service like ours.
Others may simply be sceptical about the chances of success.
But for everyone who has doubts, there are literally thousands from all walks of life who join Dateline every year.
Far from being in any way unusual, these are just ordinary people who prefer not to leave their happiness to chance.
Instead of waiting passively to see what the future may bring, they decide to grasp it with both hands. And week after week, they prove that Dateline works. This doesn't happen by accident, but by a thoughtful matching process which we have developed and refined for more than 20 years. It's worth taking a couple of minutes to learn how we go about it.



WHO ARE YOU? WHO ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

If you respond to this advertisement, you'll be sent a very detailed questionnaire.
First, you're asked to answer some fairly straightforward questions about yourself: your general appearance, your background, your education, religion, politics – and so on.
Next you're asked to describe the kind of person you'd like to meet by answering the same set of questions.
You can even specify WHERE you'd like to meet them. (It's little use our finding you the right person in John O'Groats if you live at Land's End).
Then the questionnaire moves on to the really crucial part, where you answer questions about your interests, your personality and what you expect from your social life and personal relationships.
(Most people find the questionnaire both enjoyable and revealing).
Once the questionnaire is completed and returned to us, our computer goes to work, checking through the records of every single Dateline member, searching for the person who best matches the picture you've built up.
And it's important to remember that the computer may already be searching for YOU on someone else's behalf.

COMPUTERS AREN'T HUMAN

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All the computer does is make the introductions and we find it usually selects six compatible people in each run.
Their names are given to you, all you have to do is arrange to meet. Naturally, there's no guarantee any introduction will be a success, but consider this: for once, you'll be meeting someone who POSITIVELY WANTS TO MEET YOU – and that's a good start to any relationship.
Dateline, we must stress, is not for people who think it might be a bit of a lark, but for caring people who are looking for something more. Perhaps that describes you?
If it does, fill in the coupon and we'll send you our questionnaire, together with a free copy of our paperback "All you need is love" – a book full of genuine stories of how Dateline members meet their ideal partner. Naturally, your enquiry will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Dateline

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The world's largest and most successful agency

WHY LEAVE LOVE TO CHANCE?

Yes I would like more information about Dateline
also Dateline Gold ☐ and Dateline Magazine ☐ (available at good newsagents £2.00) another way for people to meet

(Mr Mrs Miss)
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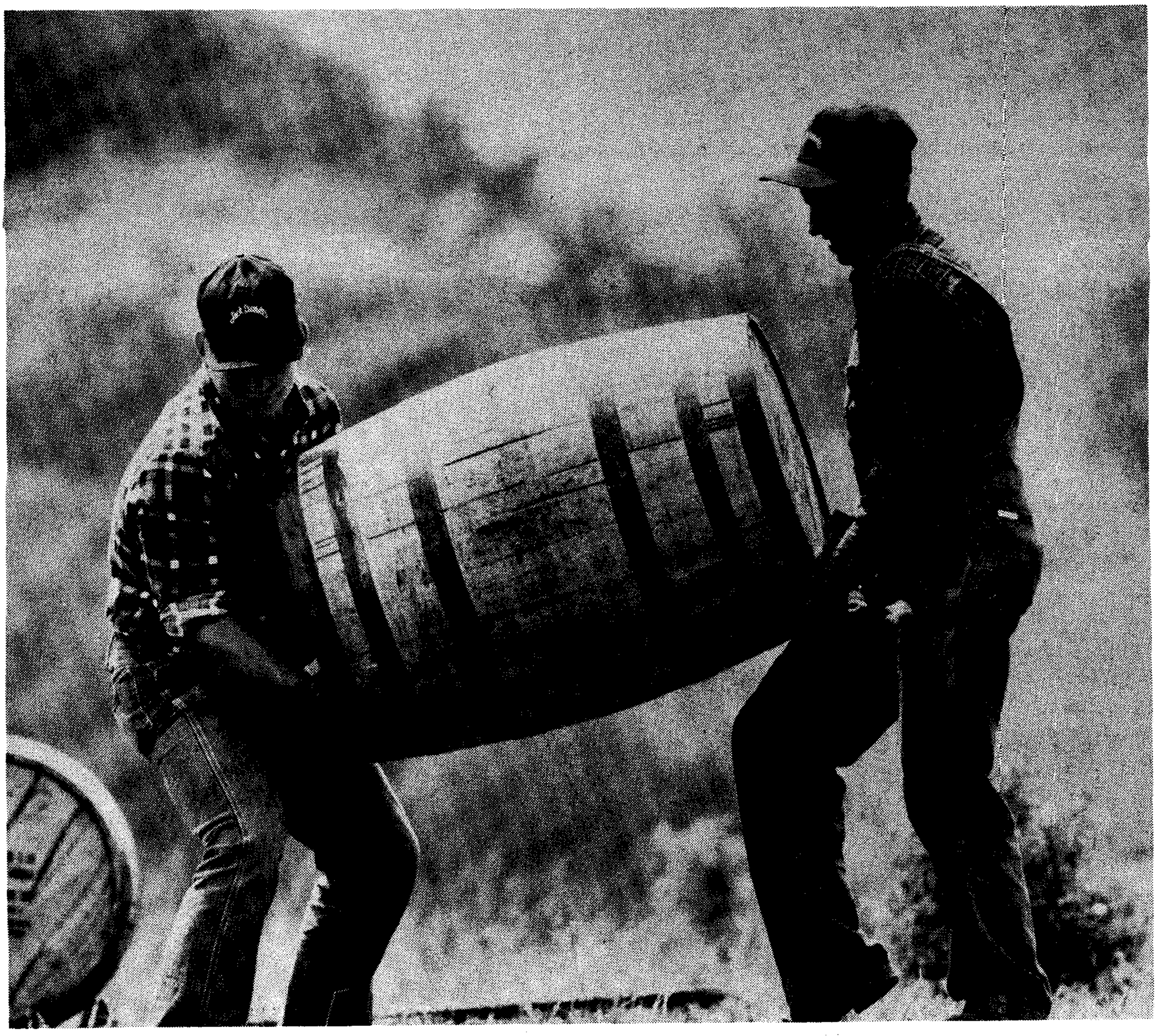
Telephone: 071 938 1011

PE 04



At Jack Daniel's Distillery, Sturdy Barrelmen And Charred Oak Barrels Are A Big Part Of Our Whiskey's Smoothness.

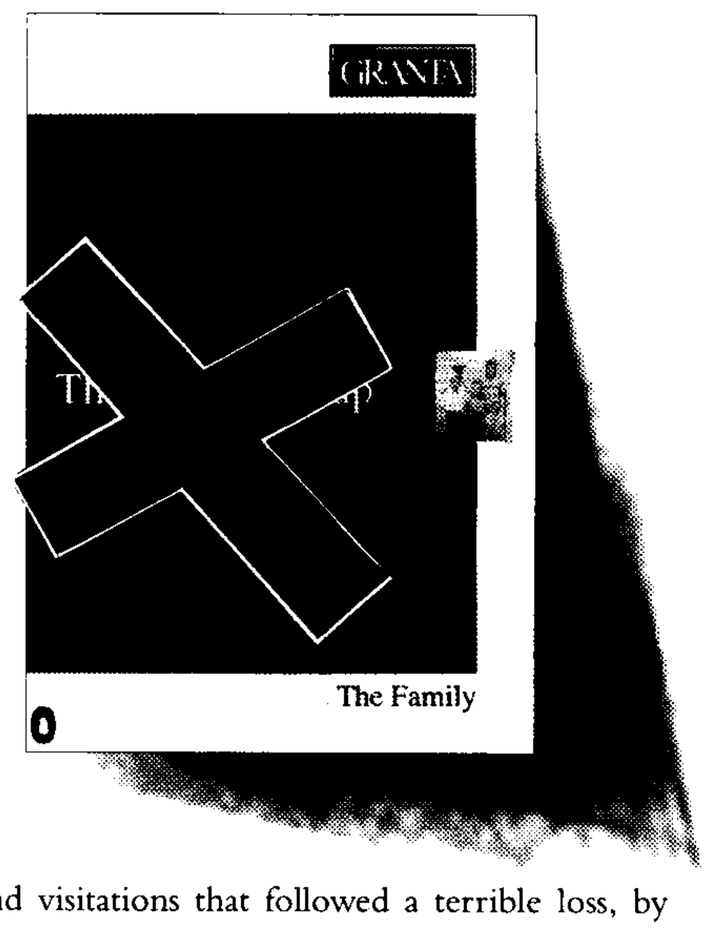
Actually, Jack Daniel's is uncommonly smooth before it goes into the oak. You see, every drop has been seeped through vats of hard maple charcoal prior to aging. Any rough edges are removed right here. Then, barrelmen make sure more smoothing occurs inside the wood. Naturally, the whole process takes a lot of time. And a lot of lifting. But, we believe, the results are worth all our barrelmen's efforts.

SMOOTH SIPPIN' TENNESSEE WHISKEY

If you'd like to know more about our unique whiskey, write to us for a free booklet at the Jack Daniel's Distillery, Lynchburg, Tennessee, USA.

FREE

'They [redacted]* you up, your mum and dad,' Philip Larkin wrote, but Philip Larkin got it wrong.



There are also your brothers and sisters. And your uncles, your grandfather, your endless cousins, your second cousins, your mother-in-law, your father-in-law and your children. There are always the children.

The new issue of Granta is devoted to the family.
In it, you'll find 256 pages of the best writing today about the most powerful relationship of our lives, including: an account of Gary Gilmore by his brother Mikal of growing up in a family that produced a murderer; the journals of Sappho Durrell, daughter of the novelist ('It would be a sad day for literature,' Salman Rushdie wrote in an affidavit contesting the injunction that sought to stop their publication, 'if Sappho Durrell's truthful and powerful voice were not permitted to speak freely'); and the story of the ghosts and visitations that followed a terrible loss, by the novelist William Wharton. Plus Mona Simpson, Geoffrey Wolff and Harold Pinter.

'The Family' was published on 27 September. You won't find it in most bookshops: it has already sold out. But it is yours free (if we receive your order in time) with a one-year subscription to Granta, price £19.95.

WHAT IS GRANTA?
Part magazine, part book, Granta is good writing printed on good paper, an unapologetic commitment to quality in an age of bland corporate publishing.
In Granta, you'll find writing that is there simply because it is good—Nadine Gordimer, Martin Amis, John le Carré, William Boyd, Jayne Anne Phillips in the last six months alone. Writing that makes you want to read it.

GRANTA

*According to the Advertising Standards Authority ruling of 22nd January 1992 you are not allowed to read this word

☐ Yes, I want to take out a one-year subscription to *Granta* with this £19.95 special offer—send me 'The Family' free plus another four paperback, book-length issues. I understand that the issues are £6.99 in the shops and that with this special offer I am saving £15.00. This offer expires in 30 days.
☐ I would also like a copy of *The Best of Granta Travel*, the 408-page hardback book of the twenty-one best travel writing pieces that have appeared in the magazine in the last ten years. It is normally £14.99. With a new subscription, I get three pounds off—£11.99.

Total amount £ ☐ Payment enclosed* ☐ Visa ☐ Access ☐ AmEx ☐ Diners Club Card number.....Expires.....

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* For Europe, add £6.00. Elsewhere add £12.00 for air-speeded delivery or £20.00 for air mail.

1028

Gnome

I HAVE frequently been asked over the past week: "Does being a Member of Parliament wreck relationships?"

My own experience, I would have to say, suggests that it can and often does. Whilst I was in the House, I often found that my relationship with my research assistant, Ms Rita Chevrolet, came under almost intolerable pressure from the demands of my job as a Member of Parliament.

However much time Ms Chevrolet and I managed to spend together at late sittings, there were always other priorities.

I always had to go down to my constituency for surgeries at the weekend, I always had to accompany my wife to local fêtes and events, I always had to go on a very long family holiday in the summer recess.

It was, as you can imagine, quite intolerable, and I think it is a tribute to Ms Chevrolet that our relationship not only survived the nightmare but drew strength from it. We were the lucky ones, and my heart goes out to those less fortunate.

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
The Onion Room
The House of Lords
London

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COLOUR SECTION

IN CHORUS, from the *Sun* to the *Independent on Sunday*, all the newspapers have studied the buggings, burglaries and forgeries at Westminster and elsewhere in British politics, and have decided they are all accidental — "cock-up, not conspiracy".

All studiously ignore the evidence that exactly the same thing happened in the 1970s when MI5 and a gang of right-wing ultras engaged full-time in the business of theft and smear to help the Tories.

The robbing of solicitors' offices is a case in point. This was common practice in 1974. MI5 agents realised then, as they realise now, that confidential documents about politicians are likely to be kept in their solicitors' offices, which are soft targets for petty burglars. In 1974, the offices of Lord Goodman, solicitor to the prime minister, Harold Wilson, were burgled. Nothing of value was taken except documents about the Prime Minister. Lord Goodman has since stated publicly that in his view a rogue right-wing gang from MI5 was let off the leash.

In 1984, the offices of James Morgan-Harris were burgled. If the burglars were looking for papers about Colin Wallace, the former army information officer who took part in the dirty tricks campaign in 1974, they were unlucky. The papers had been moved.

SOUTH West Water, which gave Britain the Camelford mass poisoning scandal and is about to fill St Ives Bay with half-treated sewage, is planning a new marvel: the commercial development of the Roadford Reservoir near Okehampton.

The controversial and unsightly reservoir, brainchild of evironment secretary Michael Heseltine, who used to care about Dartmoor until he abandoned his old constituency, Tavistock, for the more convenient pastures of Henley-on-Thames), was only finished in 1990 but is already being sized up by developers who take seriously the estate agent view that properties are much more valuable when they are close to water.

Plans are being drawn up in South West Water's leisure services department for a 72-bed hotel, a leisure complex and some tasteful executive-style housing, complete with private moorings, to go alongside the gifte shoppe and caff already there.

The whole scheme is being lovingly supervised by the chief officer of leisure services, Mrs Evelyn Furniss, who is not to be confused with Mr Roger Furniss, her husband, who is head of South West Water's "corporate affairs".

THE great sigh of relief that went up in government circles when Brian Nelson, the British army agent/sectarian murderer for the UDA, was finally sentenced extended even to the Home Office and its former parliamentary under secretary, Douglas Hogg (now promoted to the Foreign Office as minister of state).

One of the most scandalous of the sectarian murders in which Nelson was involved was the cold-blooded shooting of the accomplished Belfast solicitor Patrick Finucane. He had successfully defended so many innocent republican and nationalist prisoners that he was irritating the Protestant ultras, their assassins and their intelligence masters.

Shooting ordinary republican suspects was run-of-the-mill for Nelson and his friends in the Ulster Defence Association; but to shoot a solicitor was breaking new ground. It was felt, therefore, that this ground should be softened up a little before it was broken. "Special advisers" therefore briefed Mr Hogg on the continuing threat to the security of Northern Ireland caused by solicitors with republican sympathies. Right on cue, Hogg blurted out in the Commons what he had been "advised" — and a few days later Finucane was shot dead.

Brian Nelson knew all about this — including the approach to Hogg — and was quite prepared, if a deal had not been agreed — to tell the story in court. Poor Hogg would have been seen to have encouraged a murder, albeit unwittingly: a most unseemly state of affairs for a minister.

MARK THATCHER'S global fortunes go from strength to strength. He has recently sorted out his troubles with the UK Inland Revenue (he's been granted non-residential status for the last eight years) and Mummsy has helped him to meet some very useful people in Kuwait.

No doubt the United States Internal Revenue Service will take note of the UK tax authority's decision. If the Americans do need to speak to Mark for any reason in the future, they may well find him in the land of the cuckoo clock. Like many successful British patriots, he is applying for Swiss residency.

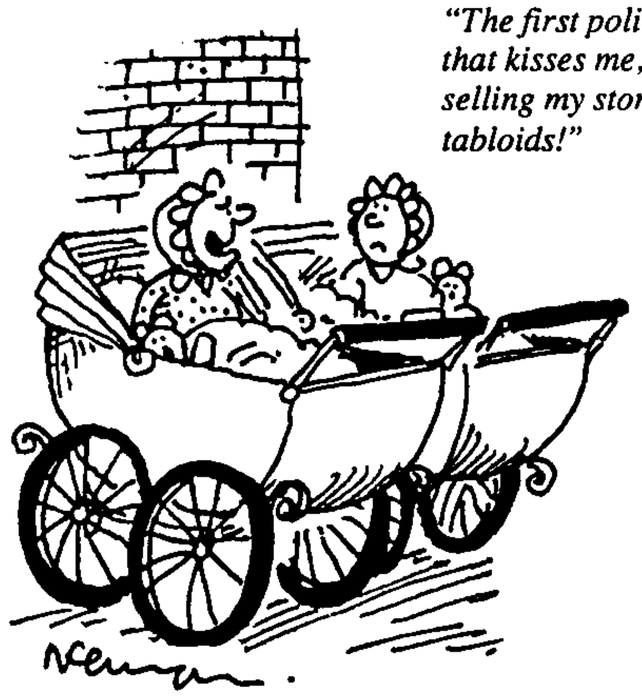
In Kuwait, meanwhile, where Lady Thatcher has an excellent reputation and is known as "Aunty", an Arabic term which could be likened to mentor or guardian, Thatch has enjoyed the generous hospitality of the Al Sabah family. The British ambassador was also on hand during her visit, and when asked arranged for mother and son to meet some very interesting Kuwaitis.

One of those was the prominent Sheika Uad Al Sabah, a widow. Through her and her British agent, a Dr Mukdam of Esher, Mark and his partner Stephen Tipping have been able to forge valuable commercial links. One of the companies that has already been awarded a contract has Denis on its board.

THE LAST *Eye* carried a letter from Peter Denton, director of administration at the Zoological Society, dismissing our recent piece about discontent at London Zoo.

He claimed that criticisms of the zoo's management were "in many cases downright libellous". Only a tiny minority of the society's fellows — fewer than 10 per cent — was unhappy with the way in which he and director David Jones were running the zoo.

On Friday 31 January, the day the *Eye* appeared, the society's council decided to sack David Jones, and abolish Peter Denton's job. "Where Mr Denton fits in, if at all, has not been declared," a spokeswoman said.



"The first politician that kisses me, I'm selling my story to the tabloids!"

BUSTY *Daily Mail* **hackette Jane Kelly was recently invited to tea by the deputy editor of** *The Spectator*, **Simon Heffer, to discuss possible contributions to the magazine. Sadly the tea date was not to be.**

Before she was able to keep her appointment, an article appeared under her by-line in the *Mail*, which was based on an interview with Jane Lawson, recently divorced from the editor of *The Spectator*, Dominic Lawson. In the interview Jane Lawson told how Dominic's success had changed him, that he had suddenly wanted to appear in *Hello* magazine, and that he had fallen under the spell of the Hon. Rosa Monckton, managing director of Tiffany's, whom he has just married.

"Dominic and Rosa's wedding was tactless," said the former Mrs. Lawson. "It was one great big advert for Tiffany's."

After the article appeared, an anxious Heffer phoned Kelly to tell her tea was off. "Dominic is terminally affected," he explained. "He says that it's only because you're a woman that he hasn't come round and beaten you to death."

READERS of *The Times* **may have been puzzled by a long tribute to a London housewife named Nell Jenkins that appeared at the top of the obituaries page a couple of weeks ago.**

She was described as a good Christian wife and mother, who had done sterling voluntary work for Age Concern in the borough of Westminster; but there was no clue as to why she merited such a lengthy and prominent obit.

"She is survived," the article concluded, "by her husband, two sons and three daughters." Oddly, it neglected to mention that one of these sons is Simon Jenkins, editor of *The Times*.

HACKS on Eve Pollard's *Sunday Express* **have been mystified as to why executives have become more sweet smelling. A memo to all staff has now explained all.**

Executive editor Henry Macrory writes: "I attach a copy of the Estée Lauder offer in last week's *Sunday Express* Magazine. This advertisement is very important to the *Sunday Express*.

"The editor is keen that as many people as possible take advantage of the offer, which is available until February 15."

We are sure Estée Lauder will be duly grateful for the exceptional services "Lady" Bollard offers advertisers in the *Sunday Express*.

LAST YEAR *Sunday Mirror* **readers had a lucky escape when Robert Maxwell dipped into his pocket (or someone else's, anyway) to refund them after one of Eve Pollard's promotions went wrong (see** *Eye* **776).**

Cap'n Bob was apoplectic after being forced to hand over about £300,000 to those suckered into paying £99 for a "holiday of the decade" to Orlando, Florida — the cheap airfare simply being a ruse to tie readers into buying expensive hotel accommodation.

Armed with a court order, *Mirror* executives visited the offices of Consumer Promotions plc, a Middlesex-based company which had organised the offer on the paper's behalf. In its application to the court, Mirror Group's lawyers claimed Consumer Promotions had refused to hand over files containing the names of those *Sunday Mirror* readers who'd sent money and had deliberately deceived the paper by not revealing the existence of so many expensive catches.

Consumer Promotions has kept a low profile since the debacle, but amazingly has bounced back with the same dubious offer. This time, readers of the vastly profitable women's glossy *Company* are being offered the chance to "Fly to Florida for just £99". Under the heading "Exclusive *Company* Magazine Offer", readers are told that "it sounds too good to be true, but you really can fly to Miami or Orlando for just £99".

The accompanying strings are neatly glossed over, but the small print gives a hint of what readers should expect. "The National Magazines Company has organised this promotion as agent for the sponsor... and the sponsor and not the National Magazine Company is responsible for the offer."

HACKS AT the *Shropshire Star* **are agog to see whether their ambitious young colleague Paul Wood will be mentioned at the current inquest into the death of Ian Gordon, a young black man who was shot by police last August after an armed siege.**

Wood arrived at the scene of the siege, near Wellington railway station in Telford, soon after the shooting and immediately started announcing loudly to passers-by that the dead man was a villain who deserved what he got. This so enraged local black youths that a fullscale riot ensued.

When Wood returned to the scene some hours later with another hack and a photographer to cover the disturbances, a gang of rioters recognised him and gave chase. The nimble hack leapt into a car and drove off, leaving his two colleagues to face the mob's rage.

Wood is now broadening his horizons. Last month, having persuaded the *Shropshire Star* to send him to Yugoslavia, he wrote a memo for his photographer, Matthew Ashton, explaining what he planned to write about. "In Zagreb, find a brothel," it read. "Do story on booming sex industry in war-torn country." Can a job on the *Sun* be far behind?

THE MEN to watch in the *Daily Mirror* **building are the Maxwell appointees whose jobs have survived the sinking.**

The *Eye* has told the sad story of former detective chief superintendent John Pole, who was sacked when it was discovered that he had bugged offices for Maxwell. But others, even closer to the ex-Cap'n Bob than Pole, are still in office.

Les Williams, for instance, went to the *Mirror* as Maxwell's chauffeur. His promotion has been dramatic: he is now deputy circulation manager. Robert Gregory, Maxwell's "director of human resources" and his substantial staff were called on every time Maxwell sacked someone and wanted them escorted from the building. For some reason Mr Gregory still survives — with his staff — in the main Holborn building.

Another great survivor is Bernard Tominey, responsible for so many new contracts handed out inside the *Mirror* building (The Catering Guild was his choice to run the new expensive canteen; as was Superseed, the firm brought in to help deal with incoming mail).

Tominey may not be too unhappy about the sacking of Copper Pole. Not long ago the pair had a furious row about a security firm called Reliant, hired by Tominey (without Pole's knowledge) to carry out a security survey of the building.

THE *Sunset Times*'**s absurd literary editor John Walsh last month printed an apparently unprovoked attack on Amanda Craig, a book reviewer for the** *Independent*, **who was furiously denounced in Walsh's "Harvey Forlock" column as a semi-literate pseud.**

Oddly, at a party only a week earlier Walsh had been overheard telling Craig how much he admired her work and begging her to review for his pages.

His public rubbishing of her shortly afterwards surely cannot have been provoked by the fact that she turned him down — can it?

THOUSANDS of *Indescribablyboring* **readers have discovered an unusual shiny black and white postcard in their mailboxes, featuring the treacherous Alex.**

The card belatedly announces the cartoon strip's arrival at the *Telegraph* and was mailed, post paid, in the hope of persuading *Indie* readers to defect in sympathy. Quite how Conrad Black obtained the names and addresses of readers of a rival paper isn't explained on the card, but the answer is surprisingly simple.

Last year the *Independent*'s Saturday magazine carried as a paid insert the so-called Facts of Living Survey. In return for answering questions about their lifestyle (ie, what they might want to buy), respondents were offered the fairly remote chance of winning a holiday.

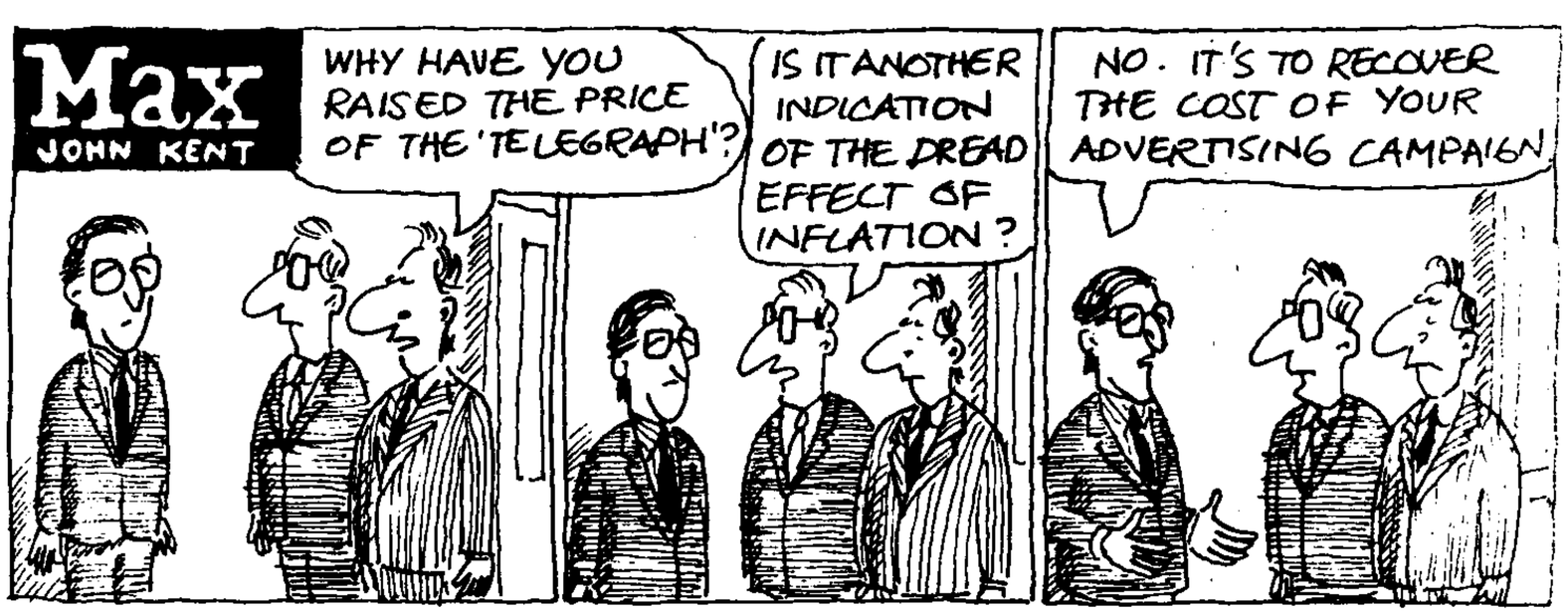
Their replies are stored in the computer banks of International Communications and Data Ltd, a company which now holds files on a remarkable 43 million individuals. The Alex cards were simply part of the frightening 30 million items ICD will post this year: no doubt the *Independent*'s advertising staff are delighted to have helped ICD compile a list of their readers' addresses for the benefit of a rival paper.

SELF-STYLED publishing magnate Tom Rubython, whose organ *Management Week* **went bust on 9 December with debts of £1.1 million, is looking for money again.**

Subscribers to the magazine have been surprised to receive, in the wake of an official letter from the liquidators, a missive from Rubython asking whether they would like to send him some money for a "Subscriber Buy-out of *Management Week*".

"Our achievements with *Management Week* over a very short space of time demonstrate our ability and commitment," he gushes, omitting to mention the numerous libel writs outstanding when the magazine went down. He also neglects to add that many creditors are still waiting for payments from his last-but-one company, Marcus Publishing plc, which was wound up early last year with debts of about £100,000.

The new title, *Business & Fortune, incorporating Management Week*, is scheduled to hit the newsstands on 7 March. But the pint-sized publisher has already got himself into trouble by using the *Management Week* logo on the mock-up of his new mag's cover, circulated to the trade press last week. "He doesn't own the title," growled a former *MW* board member, "and I'd take great pleasure in suing him if he uses it."


Max
JOHN KENT
WHY HAVE YOU RAISED THE PRICE OF THE 'TELEGRAPH'?
IS IT ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE DREAD EFFECT OF INFLATION?
NO. IT'S TO RECOVER THE COST OF YOUR ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

AFTER BEING trounced by Michael Heseltine over the route of the Channel tunnel *rail link*, Malcolm Rifkind is only too anxious to escape from the politicians' graveyard, the transport department. But the privatisation of British Rail is set to become yet another nail in his coffin.

This time Rifraff is up against the prime minister, who has suddenly become a train buff and insists on chairing the Cabinet's rail privatisation sub-committee. (Riffraff's one success has been to keep Heseltine off it.) John Major is obsessed with restoring the pre-war regional rail companies in their former glory: he longs to see the LMS and the LNER race each other to Scotland, while the GWR and the Southern fight it out to Devon.

Nobody, least of all Riffraff, has so far dared tell Major (who is not old enough to remember) what the railways were like before they were nationalised. Riffraff, who has been told how unprofitable they were, has no qualms about his own scheme to disperse the national network into the hands of dozens (preferably scores) of private operators. What's more, wherever they can justify a government subsidy, Riffraff would be happy to give them one.

Oddly, this approach does not endear itself to another member of the sub-committee, chancellor Norman Lamont, who has been dismayed that private enterprise is unwilling even to build the Channel tunnel rail link without a massive subsidy. While the Riffraff scheme will produce chaos and cost more than the present BR set-up, Major's regional rail companies would also involve a big increase in bureaucracy — like the rebirth of the Railway Clearing House.

That body used to spend many happy hours allocating its share of each day's takings to the "competing" rail companies. Lots of other regulatory bodies will be needed to control and coordinate a privatised system, which should be good news for the unions. They have seen employment fall from 800,000 in 1948 to 130,000 today. No wonder the Government's white paper is taking so long to come out.

TIM EGGAR, the street-fighting (see *Eyes passim*) junior minister for education, caused embarrassed giggles when he opened an education technology exhibition at the Barbican recently.

During his tour he was introduced to Sam Wauchope, managing director of Acorn Computers, whose range of Archimedes hardware is used in some 55 percent of schools in England and Wales. Considerably impressed by the power of the machines, Eggar suggested it might be a good idea if they were, er, used in our schools.

After a short silence, Eggar's guide from the National Council for Educational Technology informed him of Acorn's contribution to educational hardware, before moving the hapless minister on to the next stand.

WITH Lynda Chalker defending a majority of just 279 in her Wallasey constituency, the Tories' overseas aid wallah must be surely be considering an alternative — and imminent — career move.

The whisper in New York is that Mrs Chalker is first in line to be supremo of the United Nations' emergency humanitarian aid effort, which has just been revamped with considerable British input.

From the UN's point of view, however, it would be a surprising appointment. Only last week La Chalker was defending Britain's failure to honour a promise made in 1974 to increase overseas aid to 0.7 percent of gross domestic product. It currently stands at about a third of that — about half as much as other EC countries.

"They're making a mockery of Prime Minister's Question Time"

THE DESPERATE parliamentary ambitions of Birmingham councillor Najma Hafeez are drawing ever-more incredulous gazes as she trawls the last few safe Labour seats without a candidate.

Readers may recall Najma from her antics in Birmingham Small Heath where she was one of the candidates opposing the notorious Roger Godsiff. She lost — but not before a letter came to light from Birmingham's social services director Adrianne Jones to urban renewal boss David Bowman, demanding thousands of pounds of free work be done on the house of a Mr Raja Khan who was being made ill by lack of a damp course.

Coincidentally Najma is chairwoman of social services and Raja Khan controlled a huge Asian block vote in Small Heath. The work was done — despite Bowman's earlier judgement that it was unnecessary.

Now the Small Heath battle is over Najma has been spotted further afield — in Dave Nellist's seat of Coventry North East and more recently in Nottingham East. Both seats have yet to have a candidate imposed by Labour's national executive committee — and she wants one of them.

But her efforts to win the large ethnic vote in both constituencies risk turning her into a laughing stock. She has even stopped using the name of her husband, fellow councillor Albert Bore, in public, rechristening him Omar Farooq. Party members have been thoroughly confused to hear her addressing the chubby, middle-class, middleaged and thoroughly caucasian electronics lecturer as Omar — and so has Albert, who several times forgot to answer to his name. Albert converted to Islam when he married Najma but seemed to have told no one about it till now.

THE COMMONS select committee on energy has picked up on a report in the *Eye* about the sham of electricity privatisation and how hard it is for small independent generators to gain a toehold in the market by building inexpensive combined cycle gas turbine plants (CCGTs).

The issue came to a head when the committee cross-examined Professor Stephen Littlechild, director-general of the Office of Electricity Regulation (Offer). He was asked by Tory MP Peter Rost about the *Eye* report in December that Deeside, an independent, had tried to open a CCGT station at Shotton, North Wales. It had been unable to obtain gas supplies from British Gas so had to sell up — inevitably — to National Power, which has its own secret stock of gas. The operation actually *increased* National Power's dominance of the market. What did the professor have to say?

He said the Office of Fair Trading was considering whether to refer the case to the Monopolies Commission and had not yet decided. The *Eye* can now break the bad news: the OFT has decided it cannot help because: "The power station has not been built so all that National Power is buying is the piece of land and the fact that it has a generating licence. Because it has not been built, it is not generating any electricity. Because it has no market share, it does not qualify under the monopolies legislation."

This gaping loophole in the Tories' privatisation laws means that if someone can obtain a generating licence from the monopoly-busting professor, it can then sell its permit to National Power or PowerGen so long as it has not yet built the power station. As there is no gas available for independents, the domination of electricity by the two giants will continue for many years and will indeed increase as they mop up the new CCGTs. So much for free market competition.

UNPLEASANT literature about Labour MP Greville Janner which is circulating anonymously in Leicester and arriving in various disguises at the *Eye*, is plainly originated by fascists. Try as it does to claim to be non-political, the main leaflet cannot resist the occasional lurch into blatant anti-semitism.

The scandal of the children's home run by the voracious and perverted Frank Beck, however, will not go away easily and the politically motivated "victims of Frank Beck", if they can't find a publisher in Britain, will certainly find one among the burgeoning far-right publications in Europe. Janner would do well to issue a much more detailed denial of the charges set out by Beck's defence witness Paul Winston.

But the Beck story spreads far wider. The pattern which emerged from Beck's trial was not dissimilar to revelations of the Kincora scandal that rocked Northern Ireland in the 1980s. The abuse of boys by staff at Kincora (which was eventually proved in court, as it had been in Beck's case) prompted the question: why did the authorities cover up reported child abuse for so long? Was the official silence brought about by the fact that boys were made available to people in high places?

These questions have still not been answered. Nor have suspicions been laid to rest in Leicestershire. Beck's abuse, and his reign of terror, extended over young boys and girls in care. Why is the inquiry set up by the county council so narrow in scope and so secret in its operation and did Beck make his charges available to prominent local people as at Kincora?

ALL IS not well among Neil Kinnock's home electorate: a spat is developing within the party over the national executive committee's endorsement of self-styled community leader Piara Khabra as the candidate for Ealing Southall.

Local party members allege that the man who would be Kinnochio's MP committed serious breaches of party rules on his way to defeating the sitting member, Syd Bidwell, in the local preselection ballot in April last year. President of the Indian Workers' Association (a democratic organisation that hasn't had elections since 1987), Khabra failed to inform party members of his defection, in 1981, to the SDP. It is also alleged that he distributed local party membership cards for use of non-constituency supporters, some who made the trip from Slough for the vote.

After complaints were received, the NEC postponed the endorsement pending an investigation by Walworth Road. Local members were disappointed when a somewhat superficial inquest found no evidence of foul play and, at an NEC meeting notable for Kinnock's absence, affidavits supporting the allegations were not even considered. Much to the dismay of the party, the local members will not let the matter lie and are to commence high court proceedings to revoke Khabra's endorsement and review the party's investigations.

The Tories must be watching with glee. As their prospective parliamentary candidate, Philip Treleaven, said on radio last year: "Khabra's been in more parties than David Owen". He added that Khabra had even approached the late Bob Hetherington with a view to joining the Tory Party.

I UNDERSTAND the *Daily Mail* was poised to publish a dossier on Paddy Ashdown's dangerous liaisons, but that after the Liberal Democrat leader had come clean about his past affair with Tricia Howard, Sir David Fester decided publication of such salacious material could result in an anti-Tory backlash.

Meanwhile nobody has yet pointed out the irony that Ashdown's solicitors used the blanket injunction pioneered in the *Spycatcher* affair to gag the English press. As one might have expected, the bleeding heart Liberals were highly critical of this legal weapon which means that an injunction obtained against one publication can be deemed to apply to all other publications.

● *PADDY ASHDOWN has always been popular with senior figures in other parties. I saw him recently on an Inter-City train on his way to record an Any Questions? programme, basking in the admiration of the luscious Mrs Virginia Bottomley, health minister. They were getting on like a House on fire.*

THE BBC'S much-feted royal documentary about 40 years of Brenda was characterised by a curious omission. There was barely even a walk-on part for Prince Philip, although a great deal of footage including him had been shot.

The reason for this was that the programme's producer, Eddie Mirzoeff, took a keen dislike to the Duke of Edinburgh and chose to cut him out of the story. And since the programme was broadcast, the palace has made a specific complaint about its treatment of the duke.

According to the official estimate put about by the Beeb, the documentary, in which the Queen retains the copyright, cost £250,000. However, my sources at the Beeb's Kensington House inform me that the actual cost was £650,000.

ANDREW "Brillo Pad" Neill, editor of the *Sunset Times*, has undergone an interesting change of appearance. Watching him interviewed on television recently about his paper's pisspoor "scoop" ("Kinnock's Kremlin Connection"), I notice that his hair transplant has thickened considerably near the crown and that the transplanted pubes have been dyed a subtle shade of dark blond.

Pondering the mystery of Neill's hair, I am reminded of his dalliance with Pamella Bordes and all the amusing kiss 'n' tell secrets of his bathroom cupboard that she spilled to the *Daily Mail* and others.

But what is this? The edition of the *Sunset Times* that carries the Kinnochio-KGB files "story" also boasts a wretched article in the "Style" section called "The Smoking Bimbos". It is about women who seek to embarrass men in public life by selling their stories to the tabloids.

There are references to Bill Clinton and Gennifer Flowers; Gary Hart and Donna Rice; Sir Ralph Halpern and Fiona Wright. Inexplicably there is not a single word about the delightful Ms Bordes. Why ever not?

Pseuds Corner

Canary Wharf springs upon the world like Athene from the head of Zeus, mature and fully armed.

MARCUS BINNEY
The Times

Bob Carlos Clarke, the photographer of women in small amounts of rubber, has developed a bit of a thing about the "ironic fate" of some cutlery he found in the Thames. "Here are mass-produced articles... They have been used, scratched, twisted and ultimately discarded, each object gaining through this process an imprint of its provenance and a genuine personality, even a gender," he tells next month's *Antiques Collector*. He often carries cutlery with him, photographing it more than 300 times. "I force myself not to impose upon it, but rather to listen to its particular delicate vibration," adds Bob.

Independent

If Marvell is metonymic of English Literature, so Madonna is metonymic of popular culture, and the difference between them is metonymic of the ordering which distinguishes hierarchically between texts but ascribes those distinctions to something intrinsic to the texts 'themselves'.

NICK PEIM
English in Education

Restaurants are left-wing. It's no coincidence they date from the French Revolution. Both are ruled by the masses (of varying classes). For restaurants are mass-caterers much as buses are mass-transportation. Which is why being in a restaurant is so much like being on a bus.

DIGBY ANDERSON
Spectator

For four hours and 42 minutes they stood across the net from each other like a couple of magicians, in a pit of fire, locked into feats of prestidigitation, legerdemain, levitation, sleight of hand, and mental telepathy.

Sanchez the Sensational versus Mandrake McEnroe — there hadn't been a battle like it since Morgan le Fay beat Merlin in five sets on the centre court of King Arthur.

JEFF WELLS
The Australian

Throughout the past year we at Debrett's, in association with our distinguished panel of consultant editors, have kept ourselves informed of events in British society.

People of Today 1992 includes all the latest developments in the lives of Britain's most influential people. In addition, it contains some 2,000 new entrants including Sandy Lyle, Peter Gabriel, Lynn Redgrave, A.N. Wilson, Wayne Sleep, Victor Edelstein, Bruce Beresford, Gary Mason, Helen Sharman, Albert Roux, Peter Rawlins, Michael Palin, Maria Ewing and Mel Smith — to name just a few!

Letter to prospective buyers
Debrett's Publications

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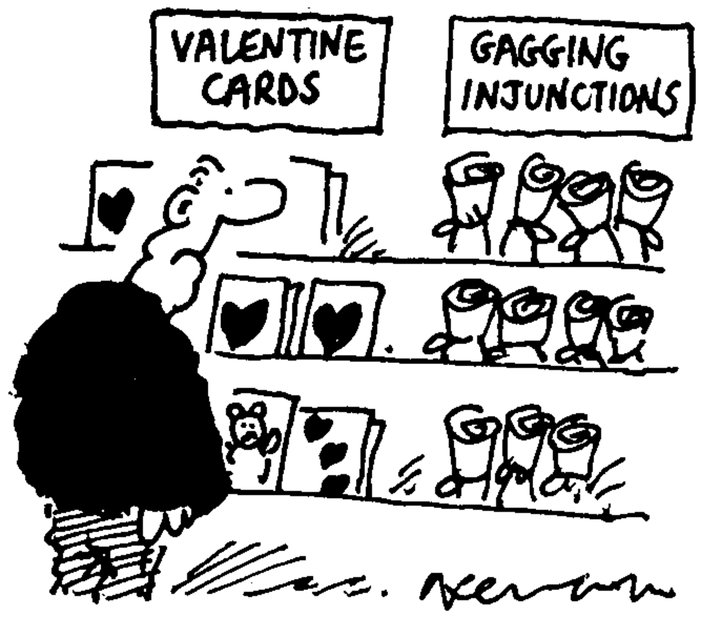


A ROW IS raging over Barbara Amiel, the new *inamorata* of sinister press baron Conrad Black. At issue, I regret to say, is the provenance of her ample *embonpoint*.

A Toronto magazine last week alleged that, as an ambitious young secretary at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, she spent her meagre life savings on transforming herself "from a flat-chested nobody to a starlet-in-the-making with what one ex-colleague calls 'significant bazooms'."

Soon afterwards she caught the eye of a TV producer and was plucked from the stenographers' pool to present a current affairs programme. To this day Ms Amiel's nickname in certain circles is "Silicon Valley".

However, when a Wapping colleague daringly broached the subject with her — "are they implants?" — Amiel denied it. "Do you think," she replied, gesturing at her ample chest, "they'd be this small if they were implants?"

● *LYNDA CHALKER, the minister for overseas development, has, I gather, chosen a curious means of practising her diplomatic skills. She apparently makes her husband, Clive Landa, wear a Francois Mitterrand rubber mask when they are in bed together.*

I AM delighted to see my old friend "Deadly" Ernest Saunders, the convicted fraudster, alive and well and socialising at a House of Lords cocktail party.

He is typically modest about making medical history by being the only man ever to reverse the onset of senile dementia — a complaint which, you may recall, procured his early release from Ford open prison.

I am told that Ernie wants to get back "into the swing of things" and is eagerly awaiting confirmation of a £70,000 annual pension from Guinness, which is now being secretly negotiated with his former employers.

PERUSING records in the divorce registry, I see that the husband of Liz Rees-Jones has named Ivan Fallon, deputy editor of the *Sunset Times*, as co-respondent and alleges that he and Liz first committed adultery at Royal Horseguards, Thistle Hotel, Whitehall Court in September 1990.

Readers may recall that last year I revealed how I had spotted Fallon at a dinner hosted by P&O's Sir Jeffery Stirling. According to the guest list he was in the company of his wife, Susan; but his companion, so I thought, looked more like Liz Rees-Jones, then publisher of the Dirty Digger's *Mirabella* magazine.

I am glad to announce that Fallon and Rees-Jones have now moved into a flat in Lancaster Gate, so the subterfuge of hotel visits will no longer be necessary.

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

SCOTS dream of "independence in Europe". Independence from whom? Certainly not from the English road lobby, which is even stronger in Scotland than it is south of the border.

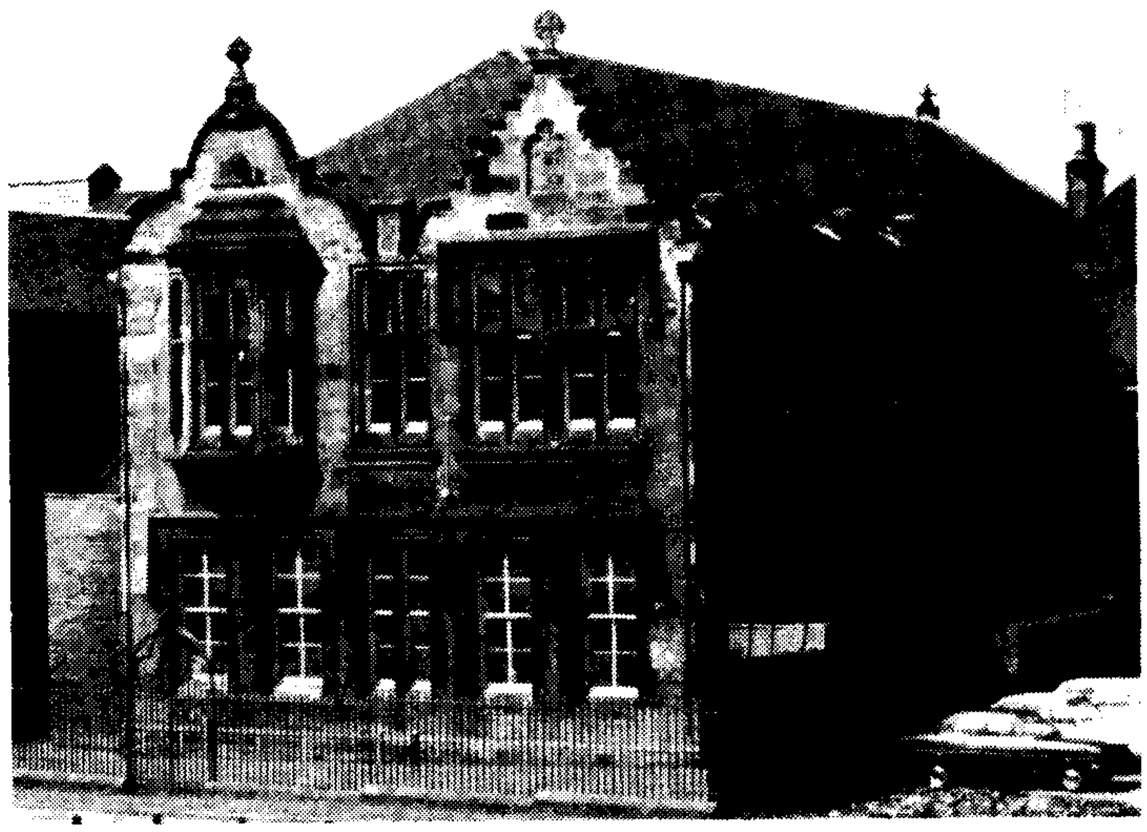
Scots may think Edinburgh and Glasgow are European cities like, say, Amsterdam and Frankfurt; but if the road engineers continue to rule with a rod of iron (and concrete), Scotland's destiny is to emulate Detroit. Edinburgh is now so polluted that it really *is* the "Athens of the North"; but the real horror threatens Glasgow.

Glasgow was European City of Culture 1990. Glasgow will be City of the Visual Arts 1996, despite being passed over for this honour by My Lord Palumbo's Arts Council (a compliment, if only they knew it). But how can a city be cultured or visual when a bloody great motorway smashes through the middle of it and when the authorities are still planning to drive another road down the east side of the city to complete a rectangle of roads planned decades ago?

London abandoned the Motorway Box in 1975; Glasgow is still hoping to get its very own box to celebrate the millennium when even Birmingham, arm-pit of the Midlands, is having second thoughts about its own urban motorways.

Glasgow is not really ruled by *Conducator* Pat Lally and his district council, for they seem cravenly subservient to the roads and transportation committee of Strathclyde Regional Council, chaired by *Strassenführer* Malcolm Waugh (pronounced "Wok"; no relation). And Strathclyde is still actively planning to build the "Townhead to London Road Link". This involves driving a road from an existing junction on the M8 south past the medieval cathedral, under the ancient High Street down to Glasgow Green and across the Clyde.

This road plan already blights the



area in front of the cathedral which the district council is trying to revitalise after a century of neglect. Road plans were responsible for the demolition, back in 1973, of the Professors' Houses in the High Street designed by James Adam and of several Georgian houses in Charlotte Street. If this link is built, it will divide the East End from the city centre as effectively as any wall built across Glasgow Green and so inhibit the regeneration of the Merchant City.

My picture comes from Frank Worsdall's *Victorian City* and shows the old Catholic School built in Greendyke Street. It no longer exists as it was demolished in 1990 to make way for an S-curve in the planned road link. Last year, the MacLennan Arch — a fragment of Robert Adam's Assembly Rooms — was taken down and re-erected on a new site on Glasgow Green. Ostensibly this was done to enhance Glasgow; in fact it was moved to clear space for the road. But the road engineers have changed their minds: the link is now to be realigned to run closer to one of Glasgow's most precious buildings: the 18th century St Andrew's Kirk. The director of roads defends this change as it will allow "development of the character of Charlotte Street". What character? Almost every building has been swept away.

So the Victorian school need not have been demolished after all. And now, having destroyed its neighbour, the roads department is trying to acquire Jack Coia's (listed) 1960s part of Our Lady & St Francis' School at a cost of some £80,000. If the roads department keeps changing its mind, the link road can act as a flail that will wipe out all the tiresome old buildings around the High Street. Perhaps that is the real intention.

I FEAR for English Heritage. When I first learned the surprising news that cultured and refined Jocelyn "Piranha Teeth" Stevens was to replace Lord Montagu as chairman of the quango, it occurred to me that this could possibly be a blessing in disguise if he drives out the hordes of bureaucrats who are inhibiting the architects and historians from doing English Heritage's real job, which is identifying and protecting historic buildings. I also hoped he might stop the insane plan to shift the organisation to Nottingham — a move which may cost some £40 million of taxpayers' money and reduce both efficiency and accessibility.

Now I am having second thoughts. Not only is it reported in The Times that Stevens accepts that English Heritage must leave London, it also seems he thinks it wrong that the quango fought to preserve the Mappin & Webb site from Palumbo's egotistical development plans and that the "protectionist lobby" is "too powerful". No doubt My Lord Palumbo is a friend — the great and the good must stick together, after all — but what on earth does Stevens think English Heritage is for if not to fight to protect listed buildings from unnecessary destruction?

Immediately after Simon Tait's Times interview with Piranha Teeth appeared, Jennifer Page, chief executive, sent a memo to English Heritage staff to assure them that the article was all wrong and that Stevens "has constructive plans to improve our image (and his!) when he takes office." Well, if he can do that he can do anything.

'Piloti'

Sporting Life

THE Jockey Club's argument that Britain's racehorse owners face imminent extinction unless they can get their hands on more prize money was made to look ridiculous at Ascot on 5 February when only 26 horses turned out to compete for a six race card worth more than £110,000 in added money.

Some owners and trainers had complained that the ground at Ascot was too firm. Yet the six-race programme at fourth division Ludlow, run on the same day on virtually identical going and offering only £14,200 in prize money, attracted 102 runners. Which suggests that for all the altruistic talk of looking after the interests of the horses, most owners will run their mediocre nags on any kind of ground whatever the risk and whatever the prize money. Whereas outside the Cheltenham Festival not even the lure of £100,000 worth of sponsorship is enough to make them run their better animals unless the conditions are absolutely in their favour.

Meanwhile the nation's most famous distressed racehorse owner, Lord Gordy White, continues to be the subject of much ribald and speculative comment over his "explanation" to the Hanson AGM of his disastrous foray into bloodstock ownership with the group's money.

Gordy's new version of the story is that the investment was undertaken to re-coup the cost of Hanson's sponsorship of the Derby. And to think that we'd imagined that the Derby connection was just a publicity wheeze to enable Gordy to impress the bimbettes! But the £12 million loss on Cheval 1 and 2 coupled with, to date, an official £1.5 million bill for sponsoring the Derby has left Hanson £13.5 million down on Gordy's two ventures.

The tight structure of the AGM prevented any painful questions from the floor as to why the Chevel 1 and 2 horses ran under Gordy's name and in his private colours. The only conspicuous success among them was Legal Case, winner of the 1989 Champion Stakes at Newmarket. But when the Slugger stood in the Newmarket unsaddling enclosure at his moment of triumph, sporting his distinctive Inspector Lockhart-style trenchcoat and trilby, his beaming countenance and post-race chat proclaimed only "Gordy White: Winning owner and big shot". There wasn't a squeak about it being a great victory for Hanson Trust.

Now that we know Gordy only held a 20 to 25 percent stake in many of the horses, does this mean he has personally accounted for 25 percent of the losses, or has he written them all off as a Hanson expense?

Another fat cat racehorse owner apparently involved in some nifty financial manoeuvring is Charles Haughey's friend, the ubiquitous "Dr" Michael Smurfit. He owns a number of top Irish chasers and hurdlers and is the sponsor of next month's Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham. There will be a number of festival racegoers from Britain and Ireland who would like to ask the doctor a few searching questions. Not about the Irish Telecom affair or the site of the Smurfit Business School, but about Smurfit's role as financial director of Classic Thoroughbreds, the ill-fated Irish Bloodstock company started by another Haughey associate, Dermot Desmond.

The share price has dropped from 44p in April 1989 to 3.25p today. It is widely understood that racing investments of any kind are rarely guaranteed to show a profit. But how Classics' assets — valued at £23 million in 1989 and including the 1990 Breeders Cup Mile winner Royal Academy — have diminished quite so drastically is a source of controversy on both sides of the Irish Sea.

'Major Bonkers'

EYE TV

Van Der Valk

(Thames)

INSPECTOR Morse has much to answer for. No ratings success can have been less expected — but few have been so widely copied. The screen is now awash with crotchety middle-aged detectives solving complex crimes in two-hour stretches — and much the worst is *Van Der Valk*.

Out of sight and out of mind for 14 years, this brief flowering in the career of the Simon Park Orchestra (number 1 in 1973) returned to the usual cries of derision last year. Viciously extended beyond all reason to 120 minutes, the programme nevertheless attracted enough viewers for a second comeback series to be commissioned.

Piet Van Der Valk is still played by Barry Foster, his brows perpetually knotted and his eyes constantly on the lookout for a minion to shout at. Van Der Valk is cross. Very cross. Other detectives may be irritable, but no one is as consistently cheesed off as Van Der Valk.

Still, even Mother Teresa would be a bit miffed if she had to say lines like "Somewhat premature, these preparations?" or "Has she had any threatening correspondence?" Because the characters are supposed to be Dutch, the script appears to have been translated from English into a sort of all-purpose Euro-bilge, the sort of unidiomatic, stilted prose no doubt written and spoken by officials of the EEC Commission on Toffee Wrapper Pricing and High-Biscuit-Content Chocolate Products.

So people say things like "Go well, Stefan" and "It's a matter not without its ramifications, of course." Almost every line cries out not to be quoted. "Don't be fooled by their manicured fingernails", shouts Van Der Valk's son Wim, whose shouting talents have so far taken him to the rank of inspector. "Those faces are on most wanted posters. They won't think twice about getting their hands dirty." After *Van Der Valk*, *Neighbours* is like Chekhov.

Such scripts are, of course, terrifically unfair to the actors, and it's a sign of how bad things are in the thespian business that so many good actors have actually been forced to take part. Foster has developed a simple technique — he just overacts wildly, mugging up every opportunity and pulling strange faces when things aren't going too well. For the rest, though, you have to feel a certain sympathy. When Van Der Valk was admitting to his boss last week that he wasn't popular, it fell to Ronald Hines to utter the desperate sentence: "Well, that's the price you pay for ploughing your own perverse furrow." He did so with an expression of such despondency that you thought he might burst into tears.

Around all this, the plot drifted along, bereft of life, energy of apparent purpose. Wim, whose casual two-day stubble was of the variety that requires many hours of care and attention, was interrogating a suspect. "The law is for those who can afford it. Rights are for those who can exercise them. Either way, you come up empty." Terence Rigby, meanwhile, was wandering around with an enormous beard, looking oddly like Terry Waite. Eventually Van Der Valk went to visit Anthony Valentine, who, being Anthony Valentine, was clearly the villain.

When you have two hours to fill every week, visual shorthand becomes something of a luxury, so we saw the lot. Van Der Valk driving up, getting out of his car, pressing the doorbuzzer, being asked if he had an appointment, being let in, showing his ID, going through the security gate, being led to the lift ("this gentleman will escort you, sir") and going up in the lift. The show was so well padded, it couldn't move.

Needless to say, any holes in the plot were conveniently patched up with shots of Amsterdam's prettiest locations, all full of men in clogs. The Dutch gimmick was relentlessly promoted — you kept expecting someone to be drowned in a dam or crushed by a lorryload of tulips. Either, in fact, would have come as light relief; for as well as everything else, *Van Der Valk* is cripplingly humourless. Is a third series being planned? It's a matter not without ramifications, of course...

'Couch Potato'

I-BSkyB

15 Ceremonial (6)
16 Originates (6,2)
18 **Satellite TV aerial (4)**
19 Cherished (6)
21 Mean (6)

The Times Concise Crossword

Sky's no limit for Justine

Dreamy Justine Spires has always made a great picture — she used to work for Sky TV.

These days, the 21-year-old stunner tops the ratings with her own Page Three show.

Fellas love tuning in to the Peterborough lovely, she's got the perfect viewing figure.

Page Three caption
The Sun

CONTRIBUTOR: Steve Sinha

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

WORLD OF HYPE

ONLY IN the World of Hype could a gamekeeper turn poacher with quite the cynical abandon displayed by Norman Woodhouse, boss of PR outfit Direct Communications.

Woodhouse, formerly of British Coal, ran BC's PR operation during the infamous miners' strike of 1984/85. After taking early retirement, he set up Direct Communications, which he now runs from his home in Banstead, Surrey.

Amazingly, Woodhouse has undertaken to puff the merits of Orimulsion (see *Eyes passim*) to the power generators of Britain. This is a disgusting product — it is a high sulphur extract from oil shales found mostly in Venezuela — which has been described by BC's newly-deposed but widely respected commercial director Malcolm Edwards as "quite the grubbiest fuel in the world".

The power generators, anxious to unhitch themselves from BC power station contracts, want Orimulsion to revive ageing oil-powered generating plants in a bid to put even more pressure on BC and its few remaining miners. This process started under Ian MacGregor when Woodhouse was enthusiastically peddling the merits of... British coal.

He is now persuaded of the virtues of Orimulsion which, beside its high sulphur content, contains a cocktail of other pollutants, including generous doses of the heavy metal, vanadium.

Ironically, Direct Communications was set up thanks to the generosity of British Coal, Woodhouse using part of his severance pay when he took early retirement from BC. And while he plugs the merits of the fuel that aims to help oil oust coal from British power stations, he continues to draw a hefty BC pension — estimated at not less than £30,000 a year.

CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"BUT HOW'S HE DONE IT?...
BBC TELEVISION CENTRE
Murdoch's BSkyB going into black
HE'S JUST A CLEVER AUSTRALIAN WHO RECYCLES OLD PROGRAMMES AND PRODUCES DOWN-MARKET RUBBISH!"
THINKS!
BAR
CLIVE JAMES! HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE ON 24 HOURS A DAY?"
BAR
"Trebles all round!"
Ken Pyne

MEDIA NEWS

ITN's pomaded political editor Michael Brunson is trying to negotiate the insertion of a new clause in his contract: that in future he won't have to do "stand-ups" — ie reports from outside 10 Downing Street or other locations unprotected from the elements.

This novel demand was prompted by his experience at Maastricht just before Christmas, where the hapless hack had to deliver his nightly updates from a windswept car-park in sub-zero temperatures. But it may also be influenced by the fact that he tends to fluff his lines when speaking to camera *al fresco*. ITN's Christmas video — a compilation of bloomers for internal consumption — has a hilarious sequence of a bedraggled Brunson trying (and failing) to record a news report during a rainstorm.

With an election looming, his chances of success are not high. The first reaction of ITN's chief executive Stewart Purvis to Brunson's request was a loud guffaw.

THE defection of BBC Breakfast News weatherman Francis Wilson to Sky News for £75,000 a year has caused some distress among the weather forecasters he has left behind.

The dashing, exquisitely-tailored Wilson was previously persuaded to join the BBC from Thames by an offer of £50,000 a year, in the days when poaching overpaid "celebrity" weathermen and newsreaders from ITV was John Birt's idea of breathing new life into the BBC's journalism.

But Birt's grandiose "News and Current Affairs Directorate" is now under such heavy fire from other, impoverished BBC departments that nobody dares repeat the exercise. Orders have gone out that Wilson's replacement must be recruited from the existing weatherpersons, who are seconded to the BBC from the Met Office and are paid civil service salaries of less than £20,000 a year.

Breakfast TV boss Bob Wheaton has been sounding them out, but finds most of them strangely reluctant to get up at four in the morning to talk about the weather to a minority audience. The first reply came from the rumbustious Ian McCaskill, who telephoned Wheaton to tell him what he could do with his vacancy unless a Wilson-style salary was offered.

THESE ARE strange days indeed at Midlands Radio, the company that owns the commercial station Leicester Sound.

A fortnight ago, all staff at the station received the following memo from their head of sales training, Barrie Smith: "On Friday last, the 24th January I left my cup in the kitchen together with a plastic spoon (not the throwaway type) in order to answer the telephone. In my absence the spoon was removed from my cup and has subsequently disappeared, despite Wendy announcing on the Tannoy a message for its return.

"The spoon has no intrinsic value apart form the fact that it is my own personal property and belongs to a specific set of implements. I would therefore like whoever has got it to please return it, since I do not take kindly to my personal property going amiss in this way."

The following day, with no warning or explanation, the group's managing director, Ron Coles, announced his resignation.

What can it all mean?

A FEW YEARS ago, Granada Television employed a firm of caterers to provide wholesome and agreeable fare for the GTV canteen in London. The food was so terrible the ACTT union denounced the cuisine as "crap". David Plowright was forced to sack the caterers. The name of the catering company? Compass.

Fact: Mr Gerry Robinson, Plowright's executioner last week, was hired in October from Compass.

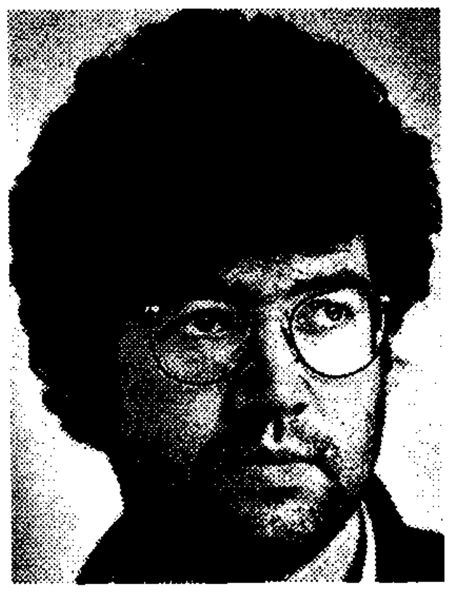
MARTINI VERMOUTH

Martini - What is it?

Martini is a vermouth, one of the oldest types of drink in the world. It is a wine to which herbs, spices and other natural ingredients, including woodworm, have been added.

Westbay 1992 Diary

HACKWATCH No 15: William Leith



WILLIAM LEITH is a twentysomething journalist who is paid thirtythousandsomething a year by the *Independent on Sunday* for filling a weekly half-page, which is embellished with his moody, designer-stubble mugshot.

Sad to relate, not all the *Sindy*'s readers appreciate his work, even with the stubble: many have written to the editor suggesting that a one-eyed budgerigar would write a more interesting column. But Leith is unabashed. He finds the details of his everyday life endlessly fascinating. They are reported with a solipsistic reverence which leads one to suspect that our hero imagines himself to be the Proust — or at least the Nicholson Baker — of City Road.

Alas, he is almost certainly mistaken. As the following recent highlights show, William Leith is a man for whom the phrases "Get on with it — Ed." and "Er, that's it" might have been specially invented.

17 November: "I'm driving down a country road at night in a rainstorm, going to somebody's house to watch *Cheers*, when I see it off to my right, twitching horribly." It is a cat that's been run over. Leith feels "ready to retch". But he manages to watch *Cheers*.

24 November: "3 am. I'm standing in my sitting-room, looking down at Dick, a friend of mine, drunk, possibly drugged, who is lying on my floor, eyes pointing out at funny angles, too far gone to turn out into the street. He must stay the night, which worries me, and I take my girlfriend into the hall and whisper, only partly as a joke: 'He might come and slash us up in the middle of the night.' " The long-suffering girlfriend tells Leith he should go and see a psychotherapist.

1 December: "Eleven o'clock on a Sunday morning. I'm walking past my friend Chris's house, so I ring the doorbell; when the door opens it's not Chris, not his wife, but his wife's sister Sarah..." She is babysitting. The baby needs its nappy changed. Leith and the babysitter change the nappy.

8 December: "Friday. I take a taxi to the car rental office two miles away, walk up to the counter, rent a 1989 two-litre Ford Sierra Sapphire, listen to a lot of stupid banter about what a nice car it is, what a good engine it has, fill in the form, then pick up my girlfriend and drive up to her mother's cottage in the Lake District for the weekend." But *en route* something goes wrong. "Flat tyre. A flat tyre. There's a hole in the tyre; the air has all come out. Something has punctured the rubber. Now the car is effectively useless." Well, not quite: once the tyre is changed Leith and his girlfriend continue their journey.

15 December: "Tuesday. The breakfast-TV clock tells me I'm later than I thought, so I call a mini-cab, which doesn't come, so I call again and there's no answer, so I hang up and dial again and there's *no answer*..." Eventually a mini-cab comes, and Leith goes to work.

22 December: "I'm at a dinner party, four of us, all close friends, on the fourth or fifth forkful of the main course..." They discuss whether a friend of theirs called Craig is gay, and if so whether they should warn his girlfriend. The talk is inconclusive.

5 January: "I'm running across the room, stretching my arm over the table; I pick up the receiver on the third ring. It's Jonathan, an old friend..." During their chat, Jonathan mentions that he goes to church these days.

19 January: "I'm standing around in my house, doing nothing really but not bored, looking at the way the light catches the pine table, boiling the kettle, surprised at how quickly the water boils, when I hear the phone." This time it is his friend Rachel.

26 January: "Steve is late, and Dave and I, who have already had two drinks, move on to a third. I walk back from the bar with two straight glasses and put them on the table..." Over the beer, they argue in a vague way about tabloid coverage of IRA bombings.

2 February: "2 am: I'm sitting at the bar of a northern hotel, drinking bottled beer from a glass..." A drunk woman wanders into the bar. She wanders out again. Leith has another beer — and, hey presto, enough material for yet another dismal 1,000-worder.

SPOOKS CORNER

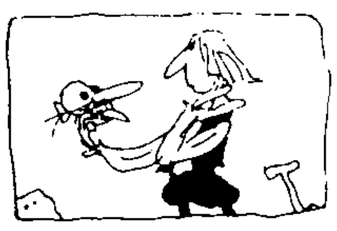
EVEN the most secretive and authoritarian special branch officer is terrified by the ambitions of Mrs Stella Rimington, the new chief of MI5.

Mrs Rimington wants her entirely unaccountable and hugely expensive service to take control of all police surveillance of terrorism and "subversion". Her latest move is made against the background of unease in MI5 that its vast government subsidies may be cut now that there is no Russian or eastern European enemy to spy on. If there is no enemy without, runs the argument, surely we can now spend more time and money burgling and bugging the "enemy within".

The phrase was first voiced by Margaret Thatcher during the miners' strike. It caused poor old Harold Macmillan (Lord Stockton) to protest that miners had fought in both world wars as courageously as anyone. And it was soon dropped. But where did it come from?

It was of course promoted by the MI5 branch which dealt in those months exclusively with bashing the miners. The branch co-operated closely with the preposterous David Hart, who set up the Working Miners Committee in his suite at Claridges.

The head of the branch was Stella Rimington. In all the media guff about whether or not a woman can do the job as head of MI5, few have pointed out that the new chief was drawn from the ranks of spies with experience not against foreign enemies but against "the enemy within" — that is, people who think differently from the Government.



LUVVIES

Joanne Pearce, who's currently playing Antigone in The Thebans, said that the workshop she had joined involved exercises that seemed at first to be making impossible physical demands. You felt your body being pushed beyond its limits. And your physical safety depended totally on other people.

But once you accepted that, you experience an intense feeling of liberation. In the first break on the first morning of the workshop she had found herself weeping in the toilet. The unsentimental warmth Gardzienice [Theatre] had generated had overwhelmed her.

Guardian

Submitted by Vivian Milne.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries printed.

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

HARINGEY

IMPOVERISHED Haringey, once the archetypal loony left London borough, wants to hand over the running of its most famous public asset, Alexandra Palace, to private developers who plan to turn the 196-acre site into a popcornerama leisure and tourist attraction.

North London suburbanites are most unhappy at the proposals which will blight the rare tranquillity of the palace and parkland; but councillors are desperate to go ahead to ease the borough's near-uncontrollable debt burden.

The Ally Pally, a massive Victorian pile, once ranked as the capital's top out-of-town theatre. But after years of disrepair and two fires, the last in 1980 when Haringey inherited responsibility from the Greater London Council, attempts to revive the venue have been dashed by breathtaking Haringey incompetence.

The council began with £8.5 million help from the GLC, made £18 million insurance money on the second fire and it promised that not a penny would have to be raised from the rates to maintain the site. It has now managed to overspend its £68 million restoration budget by £32 million.

More worryingly, no one seems to know who is responsible. The Labour council blames the trustees; and the trustees blame the council. This is a bit of a nonsense as all the trustees are councillors. Haringey, ever skilled in money matters, has also been counting the trust's debts as a council asset and, worse still, no accounts for the park (let alone the council) have been audited for the last five years.

The palace, now merely host to an ice-skating rink, pub and various exhibitions, operated on a £500,000 loss last year which is expected to rise to £2 million in 1992. Belatedly Haringey has realised that the private sector has more expertise (and money) than the public sector for running white elephants, and is now trying to hand over all responsibility to an obscure company called Powerhouse, run by Shropshire-based David Dickinson who sold his shares in Stanhope, developers of King's Cross, last year for £1.5 million.

The choice of Powerhouse has united locals in opposition. They point to a series of unworkable and laughable proposals aired by the developer. These include:

- A five-mile light rail network through the park. Any properties in the way would be "re-located".
- A Thunderbirds-style monorail to whoosh trippers from one facility to the next.
- A network of new roads to bring coachloads of Japanese tourists from central London to the palace. Inevitably, this would concrete over large swathes of north London's second biggest park.
- Facilities such as a virtual reality centre, a Charge of the Light Brigade theme park, a re-creation of the airship that once landed in the park and a set involving "giant rats... and this sort of thing," according to Dickinson.

But why is Haringey so keen to keep Powerhouse sweet? Dickinson, one of two directors, was unable to tell councillors at a recent meeting whether Powerhouse had any working capital, nor was he able to produce a letter from the its merchant bank verifying its financial status.

So far Haringey has ignored public opposition in its determination to hand the park and palace over on a no-questions-asked, 125-year lease. But an eleventh-hour intervention by Whitehall, in the shape of the Treasury solicitor, has temporarily halted proceedings. No formal negotiations with a developer can take place until responsibility for the debt has been determined.

BENT

HARD-LINE Tories in London's looniest borough, bent on hiving off town hall work into 96 inter-competing business units, have six weeks to halt Bent's runaway debt burden or risk being sued for failing to balance the books.

While they try to raise some of the £100 million owed to the town hall by the people of Neasden and its environs, it has emerged that one of the Labour defectors propping up the Conservatives' fragile regime, Coun Judith Harper, has her own mini-debt mountain: she owes the council nearly £1,000 in rent arrears.

Were Bent Tories to keep to their word about shaming debtors into paying up, Harper would be bankrupted and disqualified from office, thus destroying their majority at a stroke.

Instead, council leaders are picking on less powerful targets. During recent fraud inquiries, involving a door-to-door check of all Bent's 18,000 council properties, the African Friends of the Disabled — patron Glenys Kinnock — were found to be operating from a disused Bent council house. Their claims that they had no idea the hovel was a Bent council hovel and that they will barricade themselves in to prevent eviction have only given more ammunition to Tories anxious to axe all grant-aided groups.

Meanwhile council leaders have been busy preparing for Africa Day on 15 February with Bent, touchingly, the only Tory-run authority in Britain to be celebrating the release of Nelson Mandela from his 25 years incarceration. As *Eye* readers will recall, these are the same Tories who are trying to bankrupt Dorman Long, the Labour group leader, who tried to bend the voting rules to make Mandela a freeman of the borough.

Surely the Tories' new-found international solidarity cannot be related to the ethnicity of three of the four ex-Labour councillors who are keeping the Conservatives in office? Of course not.

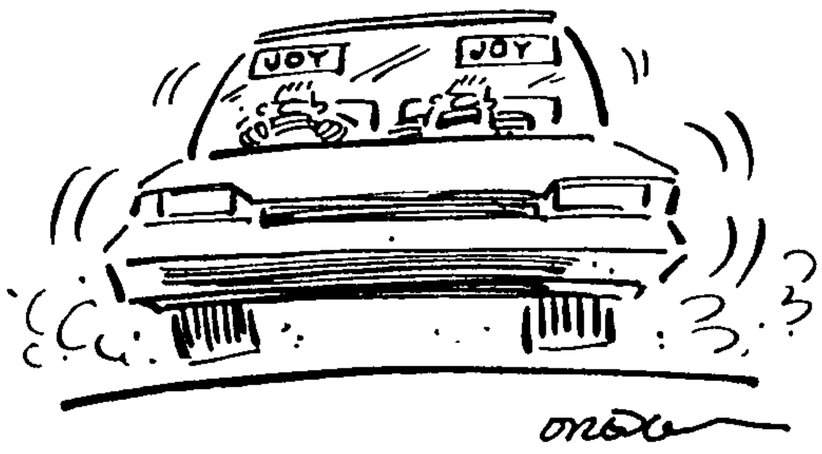
BIRMINGHAM

NO EXPENSE seems too great for Birmingham's recession-proof Labour leaders who, in the year of European integration are busily scouring the atlas for contrived cultural links.

1992 also marks the quincentenary of Christopher Columbus's first New World trip — and it provides an ideal excuse to waste more ratepayers' money. One of the planned Columbus celebrations is a "symbolic" marriage between the statue of the infamous navigator in Barcelona and the Statue of Liberty in New York.

What this has to do with Birmingham, Britain's most miserable city, is something of a mystery. But the council is nevertheless spending £60,000 on a wedding ring for the great day.

Another £90,000-odd is being written off to bring eight Buddhist monks from China to play a funeral song at one of a host of extravaganzas taking place to mark Brum's status as this year's UK City of Music. Then there's an oud player from Yemen, a loucoumi ensemble from Africa, a Senegalese dance troupe, a Paraguayan harpist and an Iranian lute band — all of whom will perform at the Spirit of the Earth concert. Box office returns can only total £5,580 — and that's if the event sells out for all nine days.



BIRMINGHAM

IAN BYATT, director of the Office of Water Services, has a tough job protecting the public from being ripped off by the newly-privatised water monopolies. But who protects the public from Mr Byatt? Certainly not his landlord, Birmingham City Council.

Mr Byatt arrived in Brum two and a half years ago as the £70,000 a year director of OFWAT. The city council recognised how tough life can be at the top and offered him one of the luxury flats it reserves in Edgbaston as temporary lets for top executives — at a nominal rental of just £40 a week. (Its market rent is estimated at £200.)

Mr Byatt was supposed to move out within a year, but has been there ever since. Indeed, he has overstayed his welcome so long that he now has security of tenure and even the right to buy the place at a huge discount.

Furious — and clearly inept — housing officials discovered that they had forgotten Mr Byatt was supposed to quit and found that there is nothing in the lease that allows them to kick him out.

Meanwhile the city's housing stock is so depleted it has nearly 2,000 people clamouring for homes and the hyper-efficient Labour council has had to set aside £3 million for bed and breakfast accommodation for the first time ever. Perhaps Mr Byatt has a spare room he could offer to one of the city's homeless.

SHEFFIELD

NOT content with losing nearly £25 million on the ridiculous World Student Games, the steal [*sic*] city's near-bankrupt Labour leaders still can't resist spending other people's money.

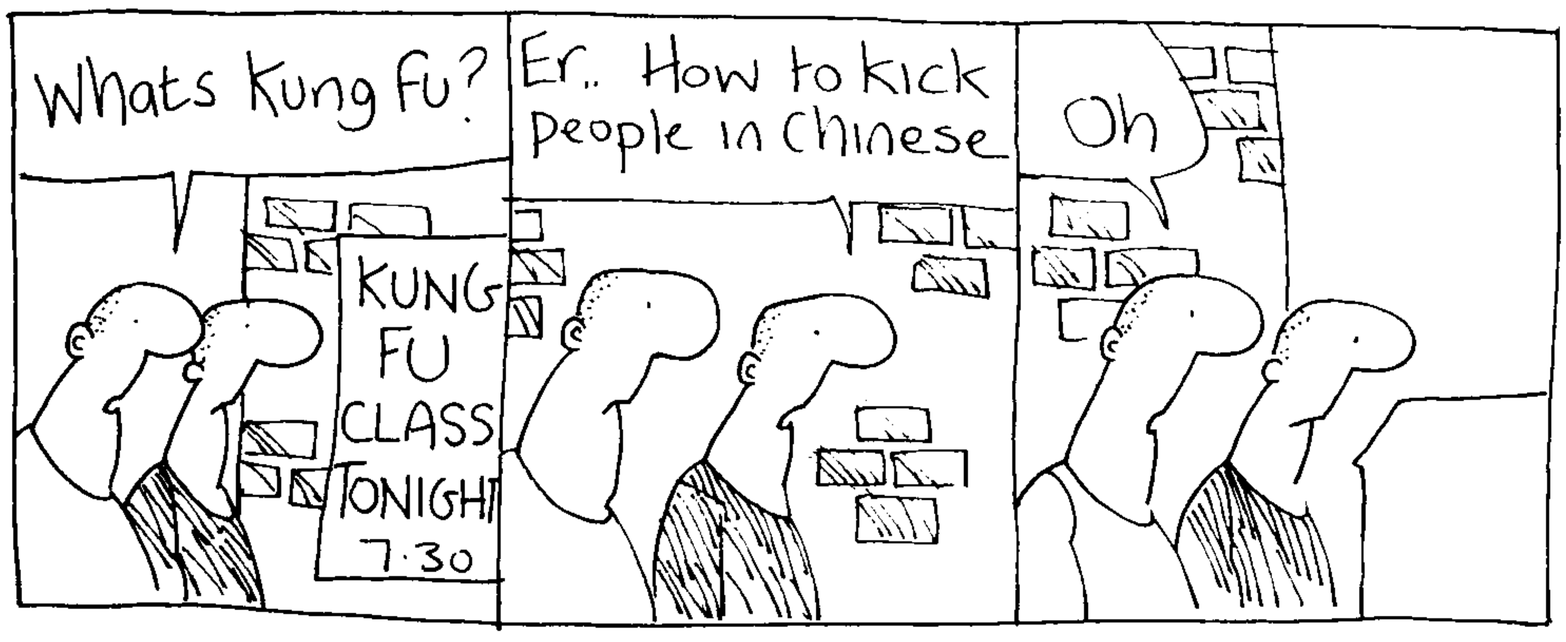
On top of their desperate attempt to match Manchester with a quite unnecessary light rail system, they are planning a cultural industries quarter, a museum of popular culture and the re-wiring of City Hall for £4 million. Meanwhile, and to the chagrin of the city's dolites, the council leaders want to host another loss-making cultural festival.

Remarkably they believe they should be able to raise about £400,000 sponsorship from South Yorkshire's recession-hit businessmen for the arts bash — a sum very close to the entire amount collected to sponsor last year's games fiasco, despite multi-million pound promises.

If the council is anywhere near as successful as it was with the games, it should have little trouble losing nearly all its £50,000 festival budget.

YOBS

HUSBAND



DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

DEER farmers are angry. Despite following government exhortations to diversify, they believe they are being penalised for not rearing sheep.

The most prominent venison vendor is the entrepreneurial Fletcher of that Elk, a Fife landowner. He proposes to send every MP with a flicker of country interest a set of red deer antlers to remind them of the horns of the dilemma which is tearing him and fellow deer farmers apart.

Like all farming topics, this problem hinges on a subsidy. The nice kind Government (prop: Ray MacSharry, EC farm commissioner) doles out subsidies called hill livestock compensatory allowances (HLCAs). These are a variation on the subsidy for each sheep theme: they are a more subtle subsidy for each absent sheep. The existence of the HLCAs has created vast flocks of sheep which only exist on paper and which honest hill farmers then dutifully reduce. The NFU says the income of most hill farmers is 60 percent subsidy.

The deer farmers say it is unfair that the shepherding classes get, say, £40 per ewe, and they want £40 per doe. Venison has many ecological virtues and prospers without poisoning the earth. It produces lean meat and the beasts are beautiful.

It all seems rather sad that a new animal husbandry is being humiliated and corrupted by the subsidies game — but then that's what the Min of Ag is for. While John Major commended deer and other new lines at the Oxford Farming Conference last month, Gummer and friends were busy penalising the venison burger manufacturers.

Perhaps the answer is for Brussels to reclassify deer as sheep, or vice versa, just as the carrot was deemed to be a fruit in 1990.

THE STORY of Ian Alcock offers a perfect glimpse of the bureaucratization of the countryside.

Finding his local hospital had little interest in his or his wife's body for dissecting or pickling, he was anxious to avoid what he regarded as the expensive nonsense of the undertaking crafts. His Grampian local authority is unable to offer a total cremation or burial package for less than £800. He found that Dignity in Destiny and other funereal insurers offered a more expensive deal.

Mr and Mrs Alcock decided they would prefer to be buried on their own hill. They took more pleasure in the thought of wild flowers and heather and their own stock growing and grazing above them than the anonymity of a municipal plot.

Mr Alcock lodged an application for permission to be buried on his own "wee bit of hill and glen" for £77. The council demanded a further £60 be spent on an advert in the local weekly to see if any neighbours objected. The environmental health officers came to inspect them.

Mr Alcock has not got consent to excavate the holes, but is sure that one sweep of a friend's JCB digger will do. The undertakers cannot supply a coffin for less than £250, but the Alcocks reckon that with their own DIY carpentry they can build their beds for eternity for £10. Mr Alcock has already bought two body bags and some plywood.

The local authority supports farmers diversifying land use. The council has discussed "the change of hill land for private burial ground" and admitted that unless the graves are within 90 metres of another party's land and there are no drainage implications the Alcocks can rest under their own sheep and cattle for eternity — or at least until the great common agricultural policy is ended.

THE National Farmers' Union Mutual is busy advertising the poverty of the former organised crime syndicate members.

The average capital of the men in Range Rovers who retired last year was £1,439. Only a third of them own a home and the rest live in sheltered accommodation or almshouses (presumably the capital value of houses does not count — or the houses themselves are worth no more than £1,439.)

Tenant farmers are usually too poor to save during their working lives and so retire into penury. Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution chief executive Peter Splurgeon comments: "A lot of our beneficiaries have only £43 a week to live on."

The NFU is currently researching the problem. "There is a lot of concern," said a spokesman. Grants, which are made for holidays as well as to cover household bills, can total £800 a year increasing some people's income by 30 percent."

Full marks to the NFU Mutual. It is doing a fine job at nourishing the myth of the poverty-stricken farmer while the NFU itself colludes happily with each new wheeze of MAFF and the European Commission to make every consumer poorer.

Sally Deedes

LOONY LAMBETH has written to its poll taxpayers announcing "the withdrawal of group payment facilities". "Groups" in Lambeth include husbands and wives and couples, and the London borough explains: "This means that you and members of your household will need to make arrangements to pay your bills separately."

In practice, couples who would normally pay the charge with one standing order from a joint account will now be obliged to complete separate forms and send them to their bank — even if the separate payments are to come from the same account.

One Lambeth resident wrote to the council's poll tax officer saying he would not change his standing orders since he didn't see why he should pay bank charges on two payments a month when one would suffice. How many other Lambeth residents will follow his example and refuse to pay for the council's inefficiency?

THE NONSENSE of the Post Office's revised tariffs for some overseas services continues unabated.

Eye readers will recall how new tariffs were introduced that were so complex the Post Office's own counter weighing equipment was not accurate enough to cope with them. One bookseller who regularly sent books abroad pointed out that the weight of many of his parcels had to be guessed and hence were impossible to price accurately.

After considerable delay and much correspondence, the Post Office finally admitted that it had made a mistake. With many apologies, it said there was little it could do to correct the problem, however. The bookshop expected that to be the end of the matter, but was taken aback to receive a handsome set of Salters Postal Scales capable of coping with the most complicated postal tariffs. They were delivered with the compliments of the Post Office!

While it is wonderful that the Royal Mail should be so caring about individual customers, would it not be more sensible to supply its own post offices with the scales for the benefit of everyone, rather than just individuals who kick up a fuss?

HUNT NEWS

THE *Sunday Express* has recently been championing the cause of the beleaguered foxhunting set — the devotion to duty of one of its reporters knowing no bounds.

True, an editorial spread put the anti-hunting views of Tory MP Dame Janet Fookes alongside the pro-hunting views of Tory philosopher Roger Scruton. But then Michael Toner's Current Events column nearby argued that "the anti-foxhunting campaign has nothing to do with love of animals, and everything to do with hatred of human beings... it stinks."

However, hackette Cathy Scott-Meek appears to have developed remarkable reporting skills during her recent "investigation" into the alleged links between hunt saboteurs and the animal rights movement.

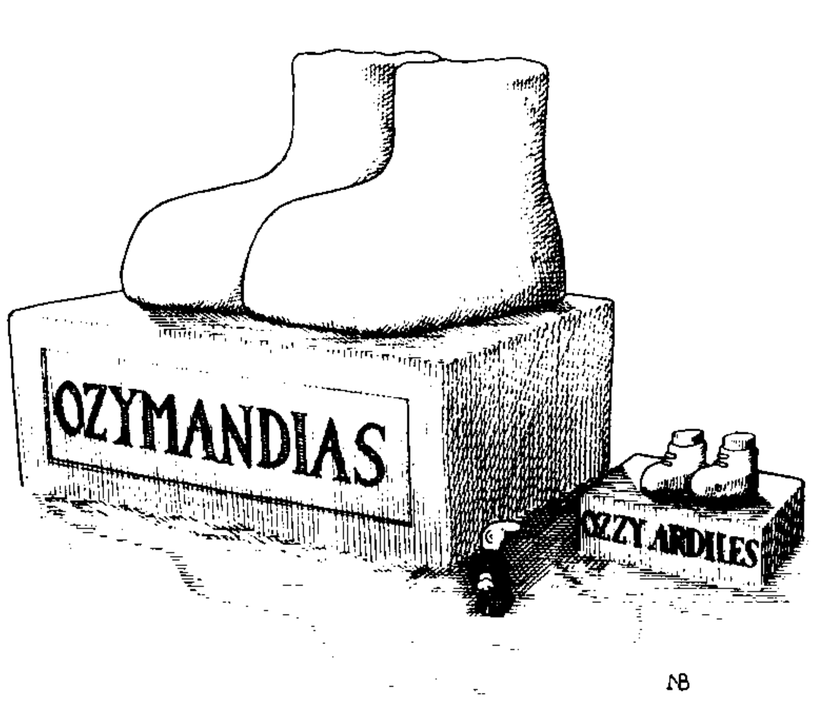
Scott-Clark, who infiltrated West London Hunt Saboteurs for several weeks, wrote that one saboteur, Anne Llewelyn, "was recently videoed at a hunt meeting dragging a woman off her horse and punching her in the face." The incident took place in the autumn of 1990 at a meet of the Surrey Union Hunt (see *Eyes passim*). Llewelyn says that during the day she was ridden at four times and cropped several times. She eventually lost her patience and when a huntswoman rode at her the next time, she grabbed the horse's reins, dragged the woman off the horse and sat on top of her until the other hunt members agreed not to ride at her again.

She denies punching the woman in the face, but when she released her, the huntswoman hit Llewelyn across the back with a stick. Then a huntsman rode at Llewelyn and hit her on the head with the bone end of a crop, knocking her unconscious. She was taken to Ashford Hospital, near her home in Middlesex, and diagnosed as having a brain contusion.

The video of the incident, shot by a member of the Surrey Union, was — 11 months later — supplied to the police, who concluded that there was no reason for Llewelyn to be prosecuted. Scott-Clark's article was illustrated by a freeze-frame shot from the video (presumably supplied by the Surrey Union) and the caption beneath the picture described Llewelyn as an "ALF activist". Llewelyn denies that she has ever been associated with the Animal Liberation Front.

A major omission from Scott-Clark's story, however, concerned her somewhat unorthodox interpretation of going undercover. On one occasion the group met at Anne Llewelyn's house before an early morning excursion to sabotage a cubbing meet. According to one saboteur who goes under the name of "Joe Taxi", Scott-Clark agreed to discuss Uganda with him in one of the bedrooms. Not neglecting her journalistic duty, Scott-Clark questioned him vigorously while in bed about how to join the ALF.

Scott-Clark was evidently assisted in preparing her article by the Surrey Union Hunt, whose ex-joint master and professional huntsman, John Funnell, last year received a two-year suspended sentence for causing actual bodily harm to a saboteur.

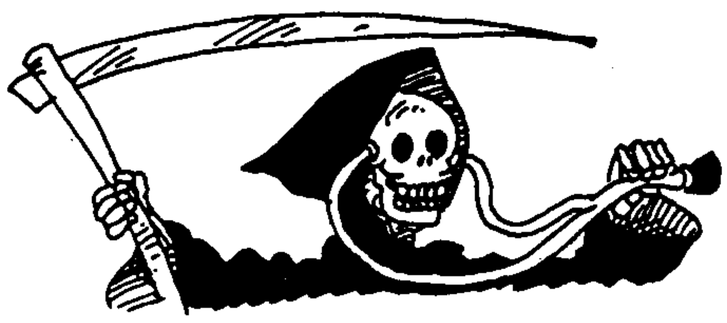


THE *Evening News and Star* in Carlisle had a dramatic front-page photograph after two of its staff attended a meet of the Cumberland Fox Hounds at Sandale.

Eleanor Mason got a great snap of a man wearing a black balaclava and wielding a heavy metal hammer. When he spotted the photographer, the man came towards her and swung the hammer at her face, missing her by only an inch. He had to be dragged away by fellow hunt supporters.

Mason had already had her camera pushed in her face and, along with reporter Jane Elliott and various saboteurs, been subjected to the standard barrage of taunts and swear-words by hunt followers. The journalists and saboteurs were also spat at and the tyres of their vehicles let down.

'Reynard'



DOING THE ROUNDS

IN health secretary William Waldegrave's home city, the United Bristol Hospitals' Trust (UBHT) has been trying to buy loyalty. It gave its doctors book tokens for Christmas.

Sadly the goodwill dissolved when Dr John Roylance, the trust's chief executive, imposed a £50 a day ceiling on course fees. Since exam (and hence career) success often depends on course attendance and a weekend away can cost more than £500, doctors are frantically trying — in vain — to swap their book tokens for the shortfall.

Dr Roylance has, however, come up with a novel way to cut waiting lists. Since all operations, however trivial, are counted together, list reductions have been achieved by concentrating solely on tiny plastic procedures. Lorry loads of "bat ears", some of whom had been waiting for more than 10 years, were pinned back en masse at the expense of more substantial operations that took longer — a triumph of numbers over need.

With all three NHS hospitals in Bristol shortly to become trusts and Mr Major's two years-or-less waiting list promise looming, managers are desperate to farm bigger operations out to local private hospitals. It is well known that some private patients reach theatre without being examined and, with only one doctor in each hospital, the level of post-operative supervision is, er, not all it might be. As many of the NHS patients are likely to be elderly, one can only hope that no one suffers in this efficiency drive. Meanwhile, cardiology and cardiac surgery provision in Bristol is now so underfunded that GPs are having to refer patients to Oxford or Southampton. Fundholders preferred, of course!

● AT **Guy's Hospital**, maternity care is under close scrutiny after a deluge of complaints. One GP received seven complaints — including claims that blood clots were left on the toilet floor, a patient cut her foot on a dirty needle and there were cockroaches in the fruit bowl. Money (and cockroaches) may follow the patients, as it is now claimed, but the cleaners seem less inclined.

● THE only sure effect of the NHS reforms has been the mass production of propaganda stationery, replete with fatuous trust slogans. **Peterborough** weighs in with "The Effect is Caring"; Addenbrookes has adopted the catchy motto "The NHS working for you in **Cambridge**"; and **Croydon** hospital now wishes to be known as "The Lifecare Trust".

● THE junior doctors' conference at BMA House last month climaxed with a rousing call for a "strike" ballot over working hours. In fact, any "strike" would provide emergency cover; and the ballot, which only applies to BMA members and not to the many who cancelled their subscriptions long ago, still has to be approved by the BMA's full council on 6 March.

The BMA's latest cunning ploy is to be "non-confrontational" and a ballot will either be refused or postponed until well after the general election. Even if there were an overwhelming call to arms, it is most unlikely that the BMA would support it as doctors in Blackpool recently discovered (*Eye* 785). Curiously, any action to cancel routine operations would cause trust hospitals to lose business and non-trust hospitals to save money.

● THE current record for NHS under-staffing is held by Manor Park Hospital (also in **Bristol**), where a single on-call junior doctor has to look after 360 geriatric in-patients, some of whom are very ill, sprawled over 18 wards. **Plymouth** comes a close second, where one doctor is expected to minister to sick geriatric patients in three busy hospitals at once: Greenbank, Mount Gould and Freedom Fields. The job includes the traditional 81-hour continuous shift, known locally as "suicide weekend".

● THE penchant for missing pension funds has invaded the Channel Islands: many of the consultants at Jersey General Hospital are mysteriously without a secure future. Where could it be?

● RENEGING on nationally agreed terms of service is one of the perks of self-government. Many staff contracts, such as those at the snappily-named **West Dorset** Mental Health NHS Trust have been doctored to include an intimidating "loyalty clause" effectively forbidding freedom of speech. Staff who do speak out are being shown the door. A leaked managerial document from **Trent** aimed to end the "paranoia and posturing of rival professional groups" by sacking "renegades and subversives". Now, in the wake of modest pay increases for junior doctors, **Taunton and Somerset** Hospital Trust has unilaterally decided to cut overtime pay for house officers.

● A NON-FUNDHOLDING GP in **Exeter** has found a good way to fight "budget bias". When he tried to arrange a termination of pregnancy for a patient, he was told by all the NHS hospitals in his region that the minimum wait for (non-fundholding) GPs was four weeks. So he arranged for the operation to be done privately and sent the £900 bill to **South West** Regional Health Authority. It has been paid...

● IN **Cheltenham**, the on-call room for anaesthetists covering the intensive care unit has been converted into a secretary's office. The doctors have now been banished to the far end of the hospital which is well outside the two-minute emergency sprinting distance. And down on the Special Care Baby Unit, SHOs with no paediatric experience have no emergency back up apart from a consultant-at-home. One junior was told he'd need to "fly by the seat of his pants" if he got the job.

● IN *EYE* 785 we may have given the impression that Mr Brian Webster, unit general manager of Ipswich Hospital, refused to speak to junior doctors about the benefits of trust status because he felt it was a waste of time and he was fed up with juniors being too confrontational. We now realise that this was a woeful fabrication: the UGM at Ipswich Hospital is Mr Brian Websdell. We apologise for any misunderstanding this may have caused.

M.D.

TOYTOWN NEWS

THE CURRENT excitement over the imploding Maxwell empire has obscured a parallel inquiry into the King of Toytown — Jeffrey Levitt — whose firm crashed owing around £20 million and is also the subject of a fraud squad inquiry. The two affairs are not totally unconnected.

Jeffrey Levitt (not to be confused with Roger Levitt, the former financial adviser to Adam Faith, Freddie Forsyth, *et al*) singlehandedly created a grossly inflated market share for his company (sound familiar?) that took him from a small north London shop to a lavish New York gallery specialising in antique toys, all in less than six years.

Levitt's extraordinary rise was due mainly to the equally extraordinary cash advances he got from a variety of otherwise respectable sources. He crashed in June last year only six weeks after gaining the Queen's Award for Exports by using allegedly forged documentation and invoices.

Some of his money-lenders are now paying the price. For example, after an exemplary 10-year career with the Universities Superannuation Fund (handling £7 billion for Oxford dons and the like), Jack Spink was fired following losses of several million pounds loaned to Levitt's now defunct Mint & Boxed empire.

Another casualty of this tendency to hand over cash after promises of huge profits was the noted toy collector and ex-Lord Mayor of London, Sir Anthony Jolliffe — now suing Levitt in an attempt to recover losses in the region of £4 million. Previously, however, Jolliffe was unstinting in his praise for Levitt's business acumen and networked him in and around the City and to his cronies in the upper echelons of the Conservative Party.

Jolliffe also introduced his chum, Colin Emson, to Levitt, the result of which was a joint business venture with Emson's private bank, Robert Fraser & Partners, which coincidentally enjoyed the presence of one Kevin Maxwell on its group's board of directors. Robert Maxwell owned 7 percent of Frasers, chaired by Lord Rippon; Emson is managing director and majority shareholder.

The subsequent losses to Robert Fraser were not unadjacent to £140,000, advanced via a financial vehicle called Blackford. This surely cannot be the same Blackford described as a mysterious Panamanian trust that did substantial business with Maxwell-owned interests (Fraser's fees from Maxwell in 1989: £595,000; from Blackford: £918,000). In 1989, a report by accountants Peat Marwick McLintock noted that although the (Blackford) beneficiaries were undisclosed: "Robert Fraser is dependent upon the services of Colin Emson for the continued sources of funds from Blackford".

Jeffrey Levitt currently awaits a decision by Inspector Knacker as to whether he will face serious charges, including fraud, deception and forgery. Following earlier civil proceedings, he is legally obliged to remain in the UK, no doubt reading avidly the continuing press revelations, and closely watching the legal manoeuvres that surround the Brothers Maxwell.

MEDIA RHYMING SLANG

"Oy, darlin' fancy a Melvyn Bragg?"

ART NEWS

AS PREDICTED by the *Eye* more than two months ago (782), the Odette Gilbert Gallery has become the first of the big Cork Street dealers to bite the dust.

Two weeks ago bankers Hill Samuel served O'Debt with official notice of the withdrawal of her loan facility. Within an hour the receivers arrived with a lorry and confiscated every single artwork in the gallery, leaving Gilbert and her assistant Alice Jackson staring miserably at blank walls. The gallery is now occupied by two young men from no-nonsense Chalk Farm receivers Levy Gee, who are studying O'Debt's book-keeping system with great interest.

More dealers will undoubtedly follow her, and Hill Samuel is likely to feature prominently in the coming purge since its St James's Square branch has doled out millions to top art-trade names in recent years. A recent internal review of account holders like Gilbert (owing in excess of £1 million) caused something close to panic at the bank. Other arty clients have now been asked to reduce their commercial borrowings by 50 percent forthwith.

In the same week as the Odette Gilbert gallery imploded, Dering Street's Paley/Wright gallery closed down for good. This was run by Maureen O'Paley, a zippy American who began her career in England working for style magazines until she discovered that art dealing, courtesy of the Arts Council, was more lucrative. She teamed up with the exotic Glenn Scott Wright, "traded up" from London E1 to "off Bond Street" and joined high rollers such as Anthony D'Offay and Anneley Juda. O'Paley has now hopped it back to Beck Road in the East End, a move that will no doubt be cushioned by more Arts Council dosh in the near future.

Next to go? Samaritans wonder how Anthony Reynolds (Dering Street) and Nigel Greenwood (off Cork Street) keep a shine on their shoes these days. Oh, and the Flaxman Gallery's phone is oddly out of order.

Letters

Rat tale

Sir,

I have a small rat-catching business and things should be flourishing for there appears to be an awful lot of these furry creatures about at the moment.

I have a business account with Lloyds bank. The other day I was somewhat miffed to find that a customer had bounced a cheque on me and for this privilege the bank had charged £4!

I have more than a sneaky suspicion how Lloyds are going to get back the millions they lent to Cap'n Bob.

Perhaps I should be looking to expand my business to include other forms of vermin.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN SMITH,

Southampton.

Power struggle

Sir,

I wonder if there is any connection between the television advertisement in which National Power claim to have just thought of the bright idea of generating electricity by wind power and the wish of the same company to use a disgusting gunk called Orimulsion in its Pembroke power station, thus doubling its output of filth?

PRIVATE EYE *has covered the hostility of the old CEGB and the Government/Civil Service, through their tame scientists, to electricity generation by wind and tidal power, and the millions lavished on nuclear stations. The new adverts are insulting to anyone who knows anything about the sad history of cleaner "alternative" generating methods and are a clumsy attempt to save NP's tarnished image.*

Yours faithfully,
C. NICHOLLS,

Bristol.

Hedge row

Sir,

Foxhunting is an unpleasant fact of country life which I would not wish to defend. Indeed, I was a hunt saboteur for several seasons and ran an HSA group in Cheshire.

To effectively sabotage a hunt you must first understand its mechanics, from fence mender to Master of Hounds. A great deal of skill is needed: a sab in the wrong place means a fox could be driven straight into the hounds.

Unfortunately such attention to detail uncovers a lot of unpleasant facts. Foxes generally live in deep cover — woodland and good hedges make the perfect habitat to site their earths. Many farmers only refrain from grubbing out this cover and recovering valuable agricultural land because it holds foxes for the hunt. I'm afraid the face of the English countryside would change quite rapidly if foxhunting was banned.

In districts where the hunts meet (and there are over 200 alone which hunt fox) the master and staff wield a fair amount of power and life can be made unpleasant for those who displease the hunt. Many farmers would rather lose a couple of acres of good land for the hunt than risk bad prices at market. Make no mistake — the woodlands and foxes would slowly disappear. Depressing reading for hunt sabs, most of which are indeed deeply concerned about animals, risking their liberty (and life, it seems) to save them.

Foxes do little or no damage. An ex-master of the Essex Union FH was quoted as saying "not 1 per cent of all the foxes in Christendom has ever tasted domestic poultry". (Since over 95 percent of chickens are in factory farms, most would need crow bars to do this.)

Foxhunting is unpleasant to say the least, but to be banned at what cost to the countryside? I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
C. CAMERON.

Oxfordshire.

O.B.N.

Melvyn [Bragg] commits two sins in the eyes of the media. First of all, he's very successful at what he does. Secondly, he is successful in more than one area.

Melvyn is a polymath: novelist, journalist, television and radio presenter, playwright. This success is too much for a number of second-rate novelists and journalists.

MATTHEW EVANS
Letter to Daily Telegraph

If there is one woman in the world I would like to dress, it is Queen Elizabeth. I told her once that I would like to drape her in black velvet. She say to me "You mean to set off this?", touching the jewellery at her chest. I say "No, Ma'am. To display *you*, just you."

VALENTINO
Today

Submitted by Arthur Blackmun, Richard Williams.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Mob stir

Sir,

Re Hunt News and its defenders.

People are known by the company they keep: as far as I am aware no hunt supporter has gone in for grave robbing/desecration, setting fire to kennels, the destruction of property on a large scale, or the costing of millions of pounds in damage through the deliberate contamination of human food supplies. Nor do they set out to cause public mayhem by having a confrontation with others who may hold different views.

That moves are now afoot to ban hunting because the activities of its opponents are a threat to public order is a measure of how far mob values, aided by largescale publicity — have gone in destroying the freedom of the individual to enjoy himself within the law. On such grounds football matches should have been banned a decade ago.

Oscar Wilde may well have said everything there is to say about hunting and its supporters. That does not mean that mob action and values should bring about its end.

Yours faithfully,
R. CAMPBELL,

Aviemore.

Hose down

Sir,

In EYE *786 Suzette Dumesnil tells us that the French for blow job is "faire un pompier". In the British Army a well-endowed soldier is described as "two hands and a fireman's helmet."*

Yours faithfully,
RON COLLETT,

Stanmore, Middx.

Pipe dream

Sir,

When Mlle Dumesnil of Liphook (EYE *786) translates fellatio by the French "pompier" she raises an interesting point. She's right; but "la petite horizontale" (according to your photo), Jaci Stephen, is not wrong. Long acquaintance with the French tongue confirms that "faire une pipe" or "tailler une pipe", (make or cut a pipe respectively) are indeed slang alternatives.*

Yours faithfully,
TONY THORNE,

Teddington, Middx.

On the tube

Sir,

What possessed Mlle Dumesnil of Liphook (!) to challenge Jaci Stephen's belief that "une pipe" is the French for a blow-job? It is, in fact, perfectly correct colloquial French for the activity: and "faire une pipe" is probably in more frequent — though not polite — use nowadays than "faire un pompier". Only the other day Christian Dechavanne, French television's answer to Kilroy-Silk, hosted a talk show at which health minister Bruno Durieux and Aids expert Dr Willy Rosenbaum were guests. Dechavanne asked Rosenbaum if by "fellation" he meant "une pipe". The good doctor beamed and nodded, while the minister looked on with a sickly grin.

Yours faithfully,
PETER GRAHAM,

Calvinet, France.

(That's enough French letters, Ed.)

Lookalike

Grotesque

Boycott

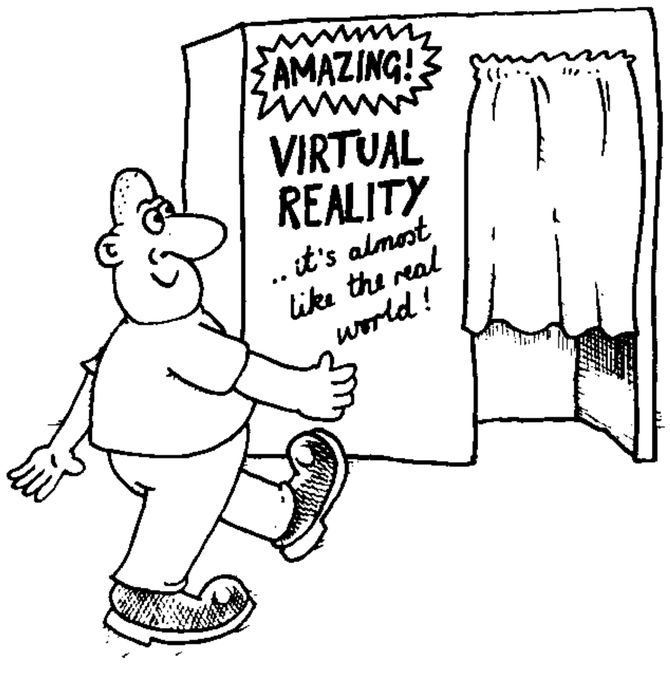
Sir,

On a recent visit to The Temple Church in London, I noticed there is a medieval "Grotesque Head" that bears a striking resemblance to the retired Yorkshire cricketer Geoff Boycott.

I wonder if your readers notice the likeness and if anyone knows if they are related in some way?

Yours faithfully,
K.J. MURPHY,

London SE1.



I-SPY *Turkey*

Submitted by D. Hoyle. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Malteaser

Sir,

In response to your Lockerbie investigation (EYE *786, In The Back); you fail to appreciate the vital issue of Malta's political position as regards Libya.*

You hinted that the US and Britain's contempt at the offer by the Maltese government to hold the case of the two Libyans in Malta was an attempt to avoid a fair trial. This may be so, but the fact still remains that the subsidised Libyan oil that fuels the Maltese economy comes not without a political cost. The offer by the Maltese government to handle the case may well have originated in Tripoli.

Additionally, you remarked rather pointedly that the Maltese police failed to find a link between Malta and the bomb. You can be assured that the incompetence of the Maltese police is of such mountainous proportions that they would fail to find a link between Siamese twins, even allowing for their susceptibility to political bias, which I once witnessed extend, incredibly, to the issuing of parking tickets.

Yours faithfully,
NAME AND ADDRESS
WITHHELD,

Bucks.

Pick up

Sir,

Re A Time to Dance. Square Eyes mentions Mr Pickup's apparent inability to rise to the occasion. What the viewer saw could well have been the fourth or fifth retake of the scene. Those of us in middle age will sympathise.

Yours faithfully,
M. CROCKETT,

Bath.

Valentine message

Sir,

Loved your story about "Porno Potter", alleged Oxford graduate, dangerous sportsman and flash con-artist (EYE, *17 January), but, alas, he did not "read English at Corpus Christi". A pity, of course; I could have done with someone like him to enliven my duller tutorials tangling with Beowulf and other essential Oxford reading. Try Christ Church: he sounds much more* THEIR *type.*

Yours faithfully,
VALENTINE CUNNINGHAM,

Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

Gone to Middle Earth

Sir,

Where on earth did you find the hack you armtwisted into writing the review on Tolkien (EYE *17 January)? He is an acquisition. His arrogant nastiness is nicely matched by his pretentious ignorance. Hang on to him; he should greatly enhance the quality of your paper.*

Yours faithfully,
G. MATHERS,

Wolverhampton.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"In fact, the music in 'Children of Eden' is not as bad as it sounds."
SHERIDAN MORLEY, Radio 2
(Peter J. Witchell)

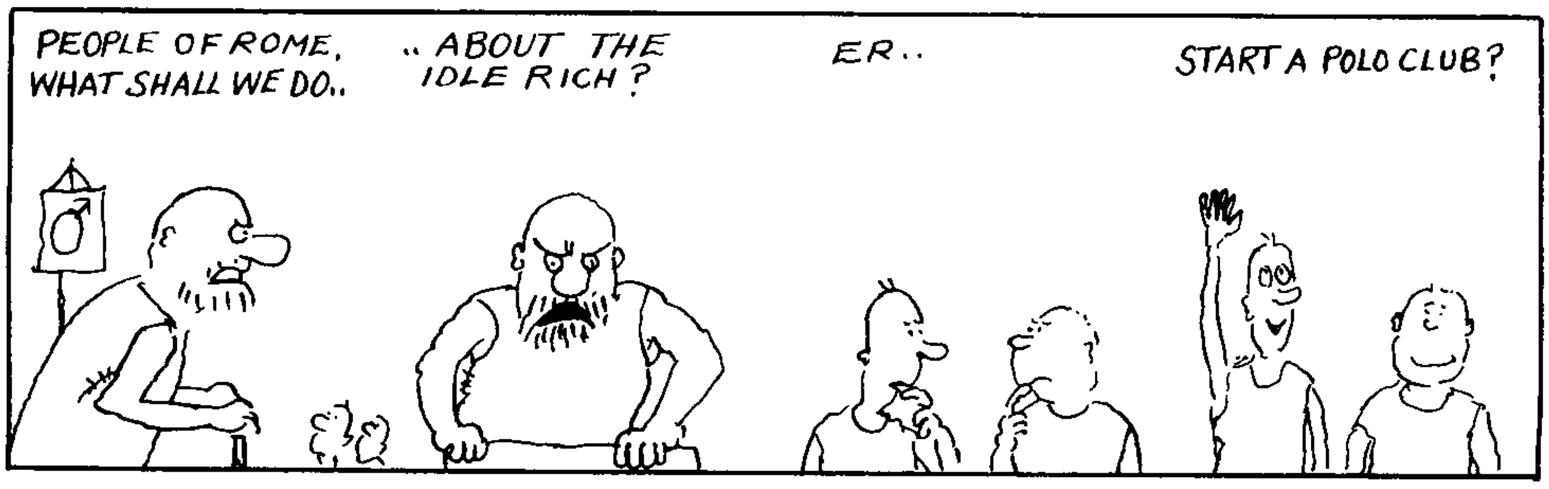
"It takes two teams to make a final — and Widnes have done just that."
RAY FRENCH
(Bob Reeves)

"Fortunately there's no surface water lying on top of the pitch."
JIMMY ARMFIELD, Radio 5
(Sean Ottewell)

"If it comes to penalties — one of these two great sides could go out on the whim of a ball."
PETER SHREEVE, Radio 4
(David Hatcher)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



Letter from

Punjab

from Our Own Correspondent

OUR government never fails to repeat its fatal errors in Punjab state where Sikh militants struggling for an independent homeland have claimed more than 10,000 lives since 1981.

After five years of federal rule and a body count averaging 14 deaths a day — or 5,500 last year — the central government has announced elections to Punjab's 13 parliamentary and 117 state assembly seats on 19 February.

But by reneging again on longstanding territorial and economic treaties, prime minister P.V. Narasimha Rao has ensured that the representative Sikh Akali Dal parties — barring a rump — and their militant sponsors boycott the polls. This makes the electoral exercise completely meaningless. Any government that might emerge from the elections in which major Akali groups have not participated will be in no position to commit the state to any accord with the centre to bring about peace.

Mr Rao's minority Congress I party is desperate to contest Punjab's 13 Lok Sabha (lower house) seats and increase its MPs any way it can. Last June's elections in Punjab were postponed by Mr Rao on the eve of polling by his newly-elected minority government because Congress members were then the ones boycotting the polls.

Besides Congress, which is fielding most of the 740-odd candidates and is likely to do well, the other contending parties are the Hindu Fundamentalist Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Janata Dal party, both unrepresented in Punjab; the Communist Party of India or CPI, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) or CPM, and the Akali Dal (Kabul) faction led by Captain Amrinder Singh, a former maharaja with limited pockets of influence.

While each candidate has a heavily armed 10-man security detail, more than 300,000 military, paramilitary and police personnel have been deployed to try to ensure a safe poll and control Sikh militants who in December gunned down more than 50 Hindu commuters in Ludhiana, one of the most patrolled districts.

Meanwhile word has already gone out from the major militants that any one who votes, dies. Turnout is expected to vary from 5 to an optimistic 30 percent. It will be very low in the rural areas where the militants play judge, jury and executioner with their AK-47 assault rifles.

Gone is the fun and humour of the Punjabi, who today stays huddled at home hoping the militants or the equally daunting soldiers will give him a miss. To fuel this cauldron, Pakistan has stepped up her "proxy" war in Punjab by sheltering, arming and training the Sikh militants, having successfully persuaded their leaders not to participate in the polls. Political power would give them a stake in the state and loosen Pakistan's hold.

In short, the electoral process in Punjab is merely a cosmetic exercise to highlight Punjab's ungovernability before it is again placed under federal rule and the security forces. The elections would also show human rights organisations like Amnesty International, long banned entry to Punjab, that the centre is democratic in intention but forced to resort to force. A re-imposition of federal rule, however, would only suspend state assembly candidates and not MPs whom Rao desperately needs.

State elections were last held in Punjab in September 1985, but the Akali government elected was dismissed 18 months later by Rajiv Gandhi, then prime minister, for its inability to control militancy. Since the frequent changing of governors — four in two years — internecine fighting between state police and the civilian bureaucracy and the cancellation of elections 12 hours before polling last June has led to Punjab's mounting body count and conditions where only the militant fiat prevails.

TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE
Illuminated by
BERT KITCHEN

DURING her interview, Mrs Patsy MacLean said: "My sister and I heard about our Western Isles Council losing £23 million to the crooked bankers from the lady newsreader on the Silver City takeaway's TV. She was so devastated she screamed out: 'It can't be true! We don't have that kind of money!'

"Thinking she meant the price the till-girl had just asked for her takeaway, old Mrs Pearson, who was just ahead of us in the queue, said: 'Don't worry, dear, it's only £14.10.' But I thought she was repeating the amount of extra poll tax coming our way, so I joined in, shouting: 'Can't pay — won't pay!' Several people in the queue took up the call, but eventually reason prevailed and Jane and I were led out into the street. But I blame the council."

"DOUG Clambourne, Izzy Frankel and I were having a round at the Winter Haven course," said Mr Bobbie Washington. "When we got to the 16th hole, Doug putted, missed and dropped dead of a heart attack. There was a tarpaulin nearby, so we covered Doug with it. Izzy called the clubhouse on his Walk 'n' Talk, and then we just played on. Later, we were told that members just setting off were asked to skip the 16th. But time slipped by and a lot of people just played through. Doug's wife was out for a day's shopping, so things were delayed until dusk. But that's how he would have liked it."

REACTING to a brochure distributed by Dey's Medical Store of Calcutta which advertised the popular Mala-D birth control pill, Cardinal Pimento of Bombay said:

"It is triply disgraceful to use Leonardo da Vinci's *Madonna and Child* as an illustration of The Joys of Planned Motherhood, and at the same time to associate Mary, who was a mother and *also* a virgin, with the Pill."

AS PART of her evidence, Miss Jennifer Laddy said: "My friend Joan Roundel and I agreed to be barmaids at the Quiglow Radical Club. But after Bill Boxer, "The Dirty Talker", came off, two strippers took to the stage, stripped off and then invited any member of the audience to come up and join them.

"Within seconds a queue of young men formed at the side of the stage, and, well — anything you care to imagine went on to round after round of tremendous applause. Joan and I thought we should close the bar, but the moment we tried to do so money was literally thrown at us and, after a moment's thought, we agreed to go onstage with trays full of pints and serve the male performers while queuing, and after they had finished. The girls had shorts."

Questioned by the police eight days after the alleged offence of allowing an indecent display on licensed premises, club president Johnny Gay String said:

"There was definitely no sex in public. I was in the adjoining lounge enjoying a game of dominoes. I have got a wife and I do not believe in this sort of event."

Superintendent Brian Mordew said: "We received no official notification of the event. However, as soon as all the evidence has been collected we will begin a full investigation."

BURSTING with rage, but maintaining strict anonymity, a senior spokesman for the Irish Army said:

"While it is true that recruitment for the service has been discontinued for several months, the suggestion made by Miss Taylor-Quinn, the Shadow Defence Minister, that our army has run out of bullets is a lie. Miss Quinn has also said that air-guns have replaced our rifles, and that our soldiers have to shout 'bang-bang' as a substitute for firing real bullets during their exercises."

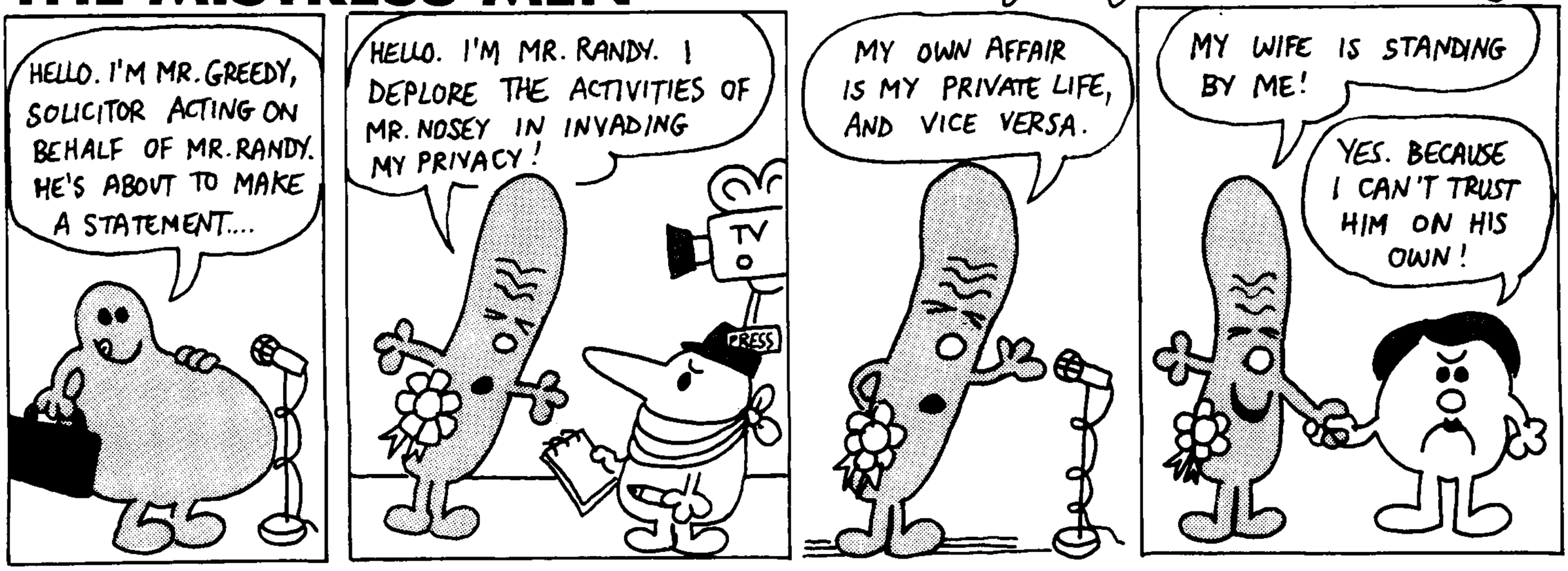
The spokesman finished by inviting his questioners to listen carefully, saying: "I shall hold up the telephone and you will be able to hear the Reserves firing live ammunition in the yard."

INFORMATION: West Highland Free Press 6.10.91; Globe & Mail 18.12.91; Calcutta Telegraph 6.10.91; Sheffield Star 5.12.91; East Lothain News 12.11.91

MONITORS: Roger Miket, Brendan J. O'Byrne, Jack Preger, Anon, S.H. Jannings.

THE MISTRESS MEN

by Roger Yoursecretary


HELLO. I'M MR. GREEDY, SOLICITOR ACTING ON BEHALF OF MR. RANDY. HE'S ABOUT TO MAKE A STATEMENT....
HELLO. I'M MR. RANDY. I DEPLORE THE ACTIVITIES OF MR. NOSEY IN INVADING MY PRIVACY!
TV
PRESS
MY OWN AFFAIR IS MY PRIVATE LIFE, AND VICE VERSA.
MY WIFE IS STANDING BY ME!
YES. BECAUSE I CAN'T TRUST HIM ON HIS OWN!

PETER McLIE

The World's Worst Columnist

She looks a lot younger.

☐ *WHY is everyone suddenly going on about the Queen?*

You'd think there were other things for journalists to write about than the Royal Family.

What about Fergie, for instance?

☐ **SOCKS are a useful invention, are they not? For without them how could we keep our wee feet warm in the cold weather?**

Worth thinking about, isn't it?

(You're fired. Ed.)

DID you see that programme on the TV the other night? Wasn't it awful? How can people produce this kind of rubbish, let alone write about it?

☐ **THE QUEEN, I read, is 40 years old this week. Amazing, isn't it?**

Princess Di's German Shocker

by Our Royal Staff **Ingrid Sewer and Mother Teresa of Calcutta**
(shurely shome mishtake? Ed.)

THERE was outrage today when it was revealed that Princess Diana has married into a German family rather than a good British one.

The Princess of Wales, 21, has for a long time made no secret of her preference for German families. Said a close friend yesterday: "She could have had a Wellesley or a Marlborough or even a Montgomery Massingberd — but, no, she had to go for Battenburg-Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. It's just typical of her."

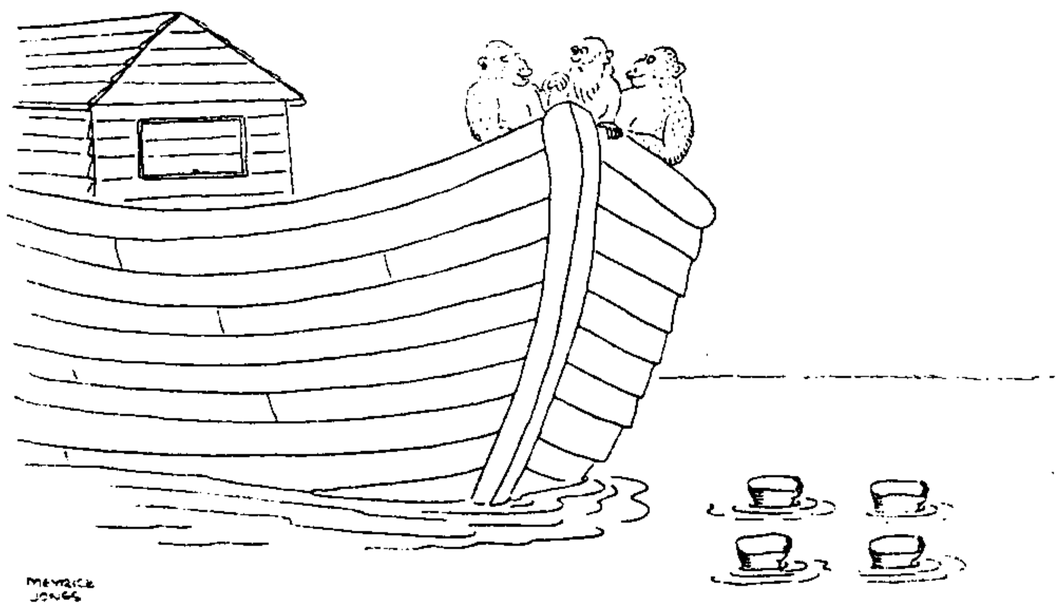
The Princess's choice has provoked a storm among MPs representing British families.

Vorsprung Durch of Edinburgh

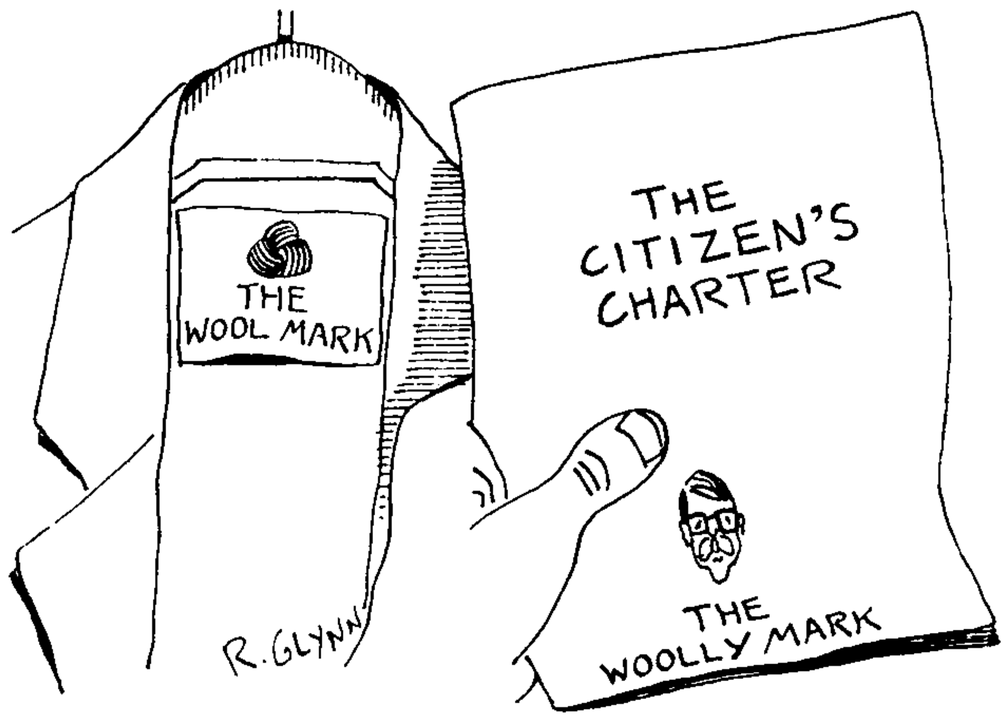
Sir Reginald Debrett, 73, said last night: "It is a slap in the face for the British child-manufacturing industry that this young woman has deliberately opted for a luxury husband of German origin rather than a good, sensible, down-to-earth English hooray like the Rolls-Royce Silver Twit, Sir Peregrine Worsthorne.

"At least Lady Lucinda gave a lead to the nation."

Mercedes-Benz is 500SL.



"I'm telling you, he came up on deck for some fresh air, had a heart attack, and fell overboard"



GLENDA SLAGG

Fleet Street's Floppy Dish

HAT'S OFF to Paddy Ashdown, the Lib-Lab Lothario from sizzling Somerset!?!

Who cares if Pantin' Paddy had a fling with his typist!?!?

What hot-blooded male with an eye for the gals doesn't like a bit on the side!?!

Passionate Paddy gets my vote any day of the week?!?

Here's to a well-hung Parliament!!?! (Geddit?!?)

WHO does he think he is, Mr Paddy So-called Ashdown?!?!

Just because he's leader of the Lib-Dems doesn't mean he can go a-squeezin' and a-sleazin' with the dame who types his letters?!?

Get on back to the Missus, Mr Bonk-Happy!?!

You won't be getting any of Glenda's X's on your ballot paper!?!

TOWELS OFF to Yasser Arafat!?! (Aunty Glenda's li'l joke!?!)

He's the 60-year-old PLO terrorist with the designer stubble who set the world alight with his bombs!!?

Now yummy Mr Yasser is throwing in the towel and taking to a pretty little piece initiative half his age?!? (Geddit?!)

Good on yer, Yasser!?! Or, as he might say, "Yasser, she's my baby?!?"

HATS OFF to Bonkin' Bill Clinton! He's the Dirty Democrat who *[Take in first two pars].*

DIDJA see Shirley Maclaine on Aspel a-smashin' and a-bashin' TV's Mister Fatso (Mel Smith to you, Mister!).

Three cheers for Shirley!?! And, by the way, doesn't she look great for a Senior Sex Kitten?!?

WHO DOES she think she is, Miss So-Called Shirley Maclaine?!?!

Just because she used to be Warren Beatty's sister doesn't give her the right to give TV's Mr Cuddly the old one-two!?

Clear off, Shirl?!? And go and get yourself reincarnated, for Gawd's sake!?!?

READ The Oldie yet??!??! Forgeddit!!?!

Here they are — Glenda's Valentines Day Valentinos!?

EDDIE MIRZOEFF. He brought *Elizabeth R.* to our TV screens. Eddie can bė a fly on *my* wall any day?!!

INSPECTOR MAIGRET. OK, so he's French and fictional. But I kinda like him?!?

DAVID VINE. TV's Mister Ski Man. I'd love a roll in the snow with you, Big Boy!?!

Byeeeee!!!

FINAL

The Daily Hellograph

40p

ESTABLISHED 1855 NO. 42,339

LONDON AND MANCHESTER

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1992

Plodder resignation rocks world

Everyone in the media was terrifically upset yesterday when one of the major cultural figures in Britain today was forced to resign from his prestigious, £423,000-a-year post as head of Granada TV.

Mr Dennis Ploddy, 52, is recognised in media circles (Melvyn Bragg) as one of the outstanding quality broadcasters of the century, who has welded his company into one of the major cultural forces of our time.

By The Daily Hellograph's Own Jane Thynne-Stuff

The Whingeing Plowright

Top arts names today lobbied Downing Street in protest at Mr Ploddy's forced dismissal, which they described as "the blackest day in the history of television".

Said one outraged arts commentator (Melvyn Bragg): "Sir Dennis is the man who gave us such legendary programmes as *Down The Pub, Guess Your Name, We Are The Jury* and *University Challenge* with TV's Charles Moore *(shurely 'Bamber Gasket'? Ed).*

"If he goes, Granada will be reduced to putting out rubbish like *Coronation Street.*"

Sir Sidney Bernstein is 112.

THATCHILL
THE FINAL YEARS

The concluding part of Martin Gilbert's much-acclaimed, award-winning documentary series on Britain's greatest wartime leader.

(Elgar-style music composed by Andrew, Lord Webber. Shot of boring-looking man in glasses sitting in library)

MARTIN GILBERT *(for it is he)*: In 1945 the British people decisively rejected the leader who had brought them to victory in three world wars.

(Film of tearful Mrs Thatcher leaving Downing Street. Shot of ageing thug leaning on farm gate)

LORD INGHAM OF LEAK: It was a black moment when I had to tell Margaret what had happened. She just couldn't believe it. She cried and I don't mind admitting that I had a bit of a blub too (*takes out onion*). She said "After all I have done for them, the ungrateful swine."

LADY CAROL THATCHER: Mummy never really came to terms with not being Supreme Ruler of the Universe. She used to wake up in the middle of the night rambling on about the great summit conferences of the past which she had organised with her friends Ronnie Roosevelt and Mikhail Stalin.

GILBERT: As decline and old age set in, Thatchill increasingly turned for solace to the consolations of literature. She began writing her now-legendary 12-volume historical work *THE THATCHER ERA ...*

(Shot of pile of huge volumes, subtitled 'The Years of Greatness', 'The Years of Success', 'The Years of Triumph', 'The Years of Lunacy', 'The Great Betrayal', etc).

MR HUGE PROFIT: I remember very well the day I first went to Chester Square to write Mrs Thatcher's memoirs for her. She gave me a big file labelled "My Greatest Speeches 1979-1990". It was an immense privilege to work with her. I can never forget how, after I had written each chapter, she would insert a short phrase such as "I was brilliant," or "Once again I was right". It was a lesson in how to write great literature.

(Breaks down in tears as onion falls from pocket and rolls across floor)

LORD HOWARTH OF BROWNTONGUE *(shurely 'shirt'? Ed)*: Towards the end I'm afraid that her judgement did rather go, and began to associate with some very unsuitable characters. It was my unhappy duty at one point to step in, to warn her that she was seeing far too much of one undesirable chap in particular.

(Film of Thatchill nodding her head as she talks to her son by swimming pool in Texas)

GILBERT: The end came suddenly, in the year 2075, when at the age of 154 Mrs Thatchill passed peacefully away, shouting: "Howe, Heseltine, Major — one day I'll get even with all of you!"

(Old black and white film of state funeral. Bells toll solemnly as cortege winds its way up Whitehall. A lone figure is seen dancing deliriously on grave in Grantham. It is the 198-year-old Lord Heath of Sourgrapes)

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: The Queen has summoned her family to Buckingham Palace to celebrate the Fortieth Anniversary of her reign.

Now read on...

CHARLES and Diana sat in the rear of her new Haagen-Dazs 500SL convertible as the faithful chauffeur, Whittam-Smith, steered them effortlessly through the park where, even now, a few brave snowdrops thrust their tiny buds into the cold February air like a scattering of white confetti on the bridal sward... *(Get on with it, Ed.)*

"Mater really is amazing," Charles said, his attention momentarily caught by a small grey squirrel clambering on a broad oak that... *(I said, 'Get on with it', Ed.)*

"When you think that in 1952 when she came to the throne most people weren't even born. *You* for example."

He turned and smiled at Diana. "I remember so well the cheering crowds and the service in Westminster. I was just a little boy but even then it made a terrific impression on me, the thought that one day it would be my turn... er 'Vivat Rex', this tremendous sound filling the Abbey."

"Don't be silly Charles. T. Rex wouldn't have played at the Coronation."

"No. No. I was there. Forty years ago. The whole nation as one saluting the new monarch."

As chance would have it, a gap appeared in the trees, offering the couple a brief glimpse of the Abbey's crenellated tower, the Royal Standard fluttering proudly in the breeze. The sight inspired Charles to share his thoughts further.

"And I feel", he continued, "that it is time for a similar sort of event. I find more and more people nowadays are saying to me that they want a great celebration to bring everyone together as one nation. There's so much bad feeling and disharmony around that they really need a healing, focusing, sort of national ritual."

Whittam-Strobes honked the horn loudly as a West Indian mini-cab driver stopped suddenly, forcing him to swerve to the opposite side of the road. "Black bastard, learn to drive, can't you? They let too many of them into this country, if you ask me."

Charles picked himself up off the floor and handed Diana back her copy of *Hello*'s "Forty Glorious Years" edition.

"Only last night I was reading Sir Laurens's book on *Where to Eat in the Kalahari Desert* and they have a great tribal meeting once every forty years and the old chief is sent off into the bush to die. And, you know, the extraordinary thing is that the old leader always knows when his hour has come and is quite willing to go."

THE magnificent 19th Century Mercedes-Lufthansa Room at Buckingham Palace was resplendent with sparkling chandeliers and a huge fire blazing, burning smokeless Eco-logs made from reconstituted cardboard boxes as part of the "Save The Carrot" campaign of which Charles was the patron.

"It's disgraceful," Charles told the assembled company. "Do you realise there are 179 different species of native British carrot and you can't buy one of them in the shop? They are all flown in from Morocco..."

"Do be quiet, Charles!" admonished the Monarch as she took her seat in front of the vast AnnaMassi 170-inch television screen with Nikon Ross digital stereo (a present from the Emir of Embezzlah).

"One's programme is about to commence," she declared, as the screen filled with the words FORTY YEARS AS QUEEN. The family shuffled to their allotted places. The Duke of Edinburgh immaculately attired as Commander in Chief of the Rank Cinema Commissioners; the Duchess Fergiana wearing a Cartier ski suit, a gift for her forthcoming fundraising tour of European ski resorts on behalf of the charity Authors in Need; Prince Edward in Stroheim-style jodhpurs carrying a megaphone; the Queen Mother sipping reflectively from her Monckton & Lawson jewelled embonpoint hipflask; yes, they were all there. The opening theme music to the programme, specially composed by Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, swelled and an air of hushed expectancy filled the room...

"MARVELLOUS." "Terrific." "Brillo, Mater." The room echoed with delightful plaudits as the Queen smiled round at her appreciative family. Charles suddenly felt obliged to speak for them all.

"I'd just like to say, Mater, on behalf of all the sort of family, as it were, that you were absolutely magnificent and the programme really was the climax to what I think we'd all agree have been forty really extraordinary years."

There was a polite applause and his mother turned to him to reply.

"Thank you, Charles. You're so kind. You don't think it was a bit flat?"

"No, no, Mater." Charles hastened to reassure her.

"It's just that some of the best bits were left out."

"Really?" Charles was amazed. "The way these telly people behave. It really is appalling."

"No, Charles. *I* left them out. I'm saving up the really good material for my 50th. In 2002."

"Good idea."

"Fab."

"Can't wait."

As the chorus of voices began again Charles stared disconsolately at the huge screen as the picture shrank, first to a tiny dot, and then to infinity.

(To be continued)

LATEST ELECTION SHOCKER

MAJOR — THE MOSCOW CONNECTION

by Our Smear Staff **Sir Vical Smear**

THE POLITICAL world was rocked to its foundations yesterday by the extraordinary revelations that the Prime Minister John Major has had "close links" with senior Russian figures, including the well-known anti-Communist Boris Godunov.

A top-secret file, handed anonymously to *Private Eye*, contains hundreds of incriminating photographs cut from the *Daily Telegraph*, showing

● Major openly shaking hands with top Kremlin boss Mikhail Gorbachev.

● Major openly walking through the streets of Communist Moscow wearing a grey fur hat.

● Major openly greeting notorious Russian leader Boris Yeltsin on the steps of 10 Downing Street.

● Major openly eating Russian-style caviar, of the type much loved by Stalin, at the opening of the Happy Eater restaurant, Chorleywood.

Last night, as these astonishing revelations were made public, top Tories were quick to leap to the Prime Minister's defence in what one was calling "an exercise in damage limitation".

"The Prime Minister's patriotism is not in doubt," said Sir Bufton Tufton. "If he has had an affair with his secretary it is a matter for him and him alone."

Neill denies links with 'Evil Empire'

by Our Dirty Tricks Staff **Smear Harmsworth**

AN ANGRY Mr Andrew Neill, 43, last night vigorously denied that he had "any links" with the *Sunday Times* or its proprietor, as had been claimed in recent newspaper articles.

"I met Mr Rupert Murdoch on a couple of occasions only," he said. "On each occasion he offered me a job, but there was nothing more to it than that.

"The suggestion that I would print a whole lot of anti-Labour smear stories just because I thought my proprietor would like it is utterly disgraceful and completely true."

Mr Andrew Neill is 39.

SMEARS LATEST

MP admits to not having affair with secretary

by Our Political Affairs Staff **Hugh Massivebonk**

A BACKBENCH MP last night shamefacedly admitted to a specially convened press conference that he had not had a sexual relationship with his secretary.

"I have tried to hush this one up," confessed a humiliated Gerald Barcode, 46, MP for Notverymuchlonger. "But I have now decided to come clean before the press rumble me.

"My wife Lyn is standing by me and accepts that, even in happy marriages, people sometimes do not have affairs."

The Daily Hellograph

The Press And Prurience

THE most disturbing feature of what will inevitably become known as "The Ashdown Affair" has not been the behaviour of the Member for Yeovil himself but rather the highly questionable role played in this whole unhappy business by certain sections of the popular press. No one would maintain that a politician's private life should be entirely above scrutiny. Yet the fact that an MP should have had a brief sexual liaison with his secretary a long time ago cannot possibly constitute a legitimate subject for interest by the press. The salacious and prurient coverage of this particular story by the tabloid papers has marked a new low point in the history of British journalism. Readers have not been spared a single aspect of this sorry story... tasteless... titillatory... renews case for Invasion of Privacy Bill... crying need to put house in order... day when Fleet Street should hang its head in shame.

ON OTHER PAGES

Paddy's Agony — Day Two 1

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New Pics Of Paddy's Bird 3

Why Westminster Marriages Fall Apart 4

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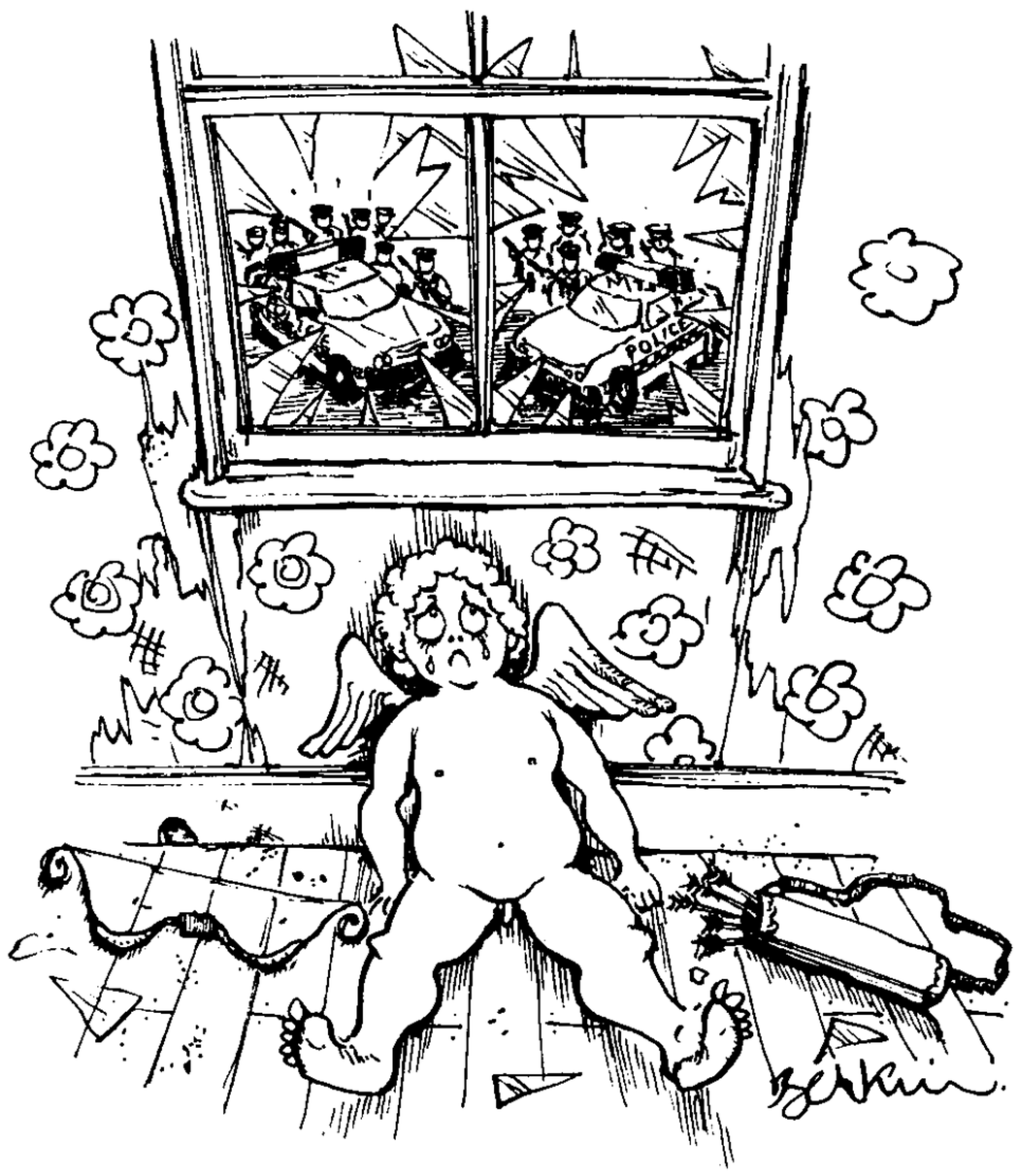
From Lloyd George to Parkinson — A Brief Guide To The History Of Bonkbenching 7

Plus More Pics Of How Westminster's Mr Clean Got Caught With His Trousers Down 14-26

There's Moore Fun In The Daily Telegraph!



ROBERT MAXWELL

HIS HARPS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

EMI record sleeve (1960)

SPECTACULAR HARPS

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Sunday

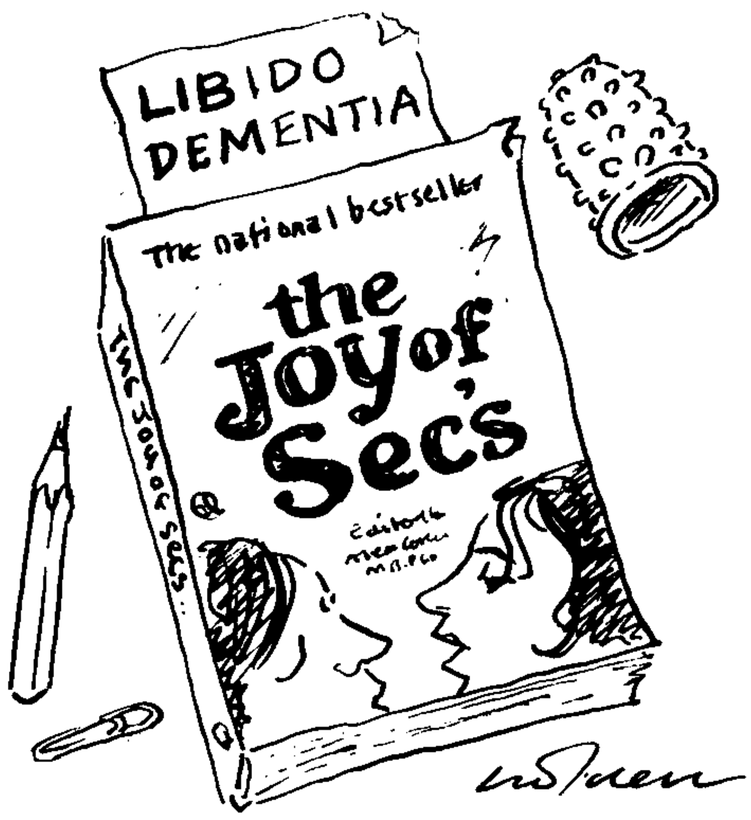
I was very considerably surprised when I opened the Sunday Times this morning to learn that Mr Kinnock had been a Soviet agent. My friend Chris rang me in great excitement. "Isn't it great news about Kinnock?" he said. "You must go on television at once and say how much you deplore these attempts to smear the Labour leader." "But I thought you said it was good news?" I replied. "Of course it is John — but you are meant to be above that sort of thing." I have no idea what he meant. Sometimes one has to admit that Mrs Thatcher was right when she said: "It's a funny old world."

Monday

What an extraordinary coincidence! No sooner has Mr Kinnock's reputation been ruined than suddenly Mr Ashdown is revealed to have had an affair. "This is getting worrying" I said to my friend Chris. "Both the other leaders have been smeared. Do you think it will be me next?" Chris gave me one of his funny looks and laughed. "Oh no, John," he said, "I have this funny feeling that somehow you'll be OK on this one."

Tuesday

It seems that Mr Ashdown is more popular than ever as a result of this unhappy business about his secretary. My friend Chris rang me up to say "Have you seen the bad news —'86 Per Cent Back Ashdown Says Polls'. It looks as though this one's rather backfired on us. You've got to do something." Luckily, just at that moment Mr O'Donnell came in with the script of a special interview I was to give to Radio One. I was glad to see that I completely sympathised with Mr Ashdown and that I too had been through a rocky patch in my marriage which would get a lot of sympathy with the voters." "Oh, when was that?" I said. "Don't you



remember that time when you were Foreign Secretary and you didn't know where any of the countries were. You had to work late every night for several weeks reciting all their names to Mr Waldegrave." It all came back to me — "France, Spain, Estonia, the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh." It's funny to think that in those days Mr Waldegrave knew more than me. But now I know at least one thing that he doesn't know — although he will find out very soon, oh yes!

Wednesday

Today is the big day of my interview on Radio One! I think they are all getting to know me quite well at Broadcasting House because I am there so often! I was very considerably delighted when they rang me up to say I could choose four records of my choice to go with my interview. Now is my chance to have all the songs that Mr O'Donnell wouldn't let me use on Desert Island Discs. They are "Shrimp Boats Are A Comin' In" by Alma Cogan, "The Party's Over" by Frank Sinatra, "I'm A Three-Time Loser" by Rod Stewart and "Hello, Goodbye" by the Beatles.

Thursday

I am glad to say that my choice of songs has proved a great success with the listeners and the newspapers have praised the way I sympathised with a man whose political career is unfortunately, as I put it, "completely finished through no fault of his own". My friend Chris rang up to say there had been several more offices burgled in the House of Commons — all, as it happens, belonging to Labour MPs. "Perhaps," I suggested to Chris, "we should have a new charter to protect Labour MPs from being burgled". Funnily enough, when I said this there was an odd click and a mystery voice started to laugh in the background. Clearly we had some sort of crossed line.

Friday

I am on top of the world, having very considerably humiliated Mr Kinnock in the House of Commons. And it was on TV! My wife Norman and I watched it on the 6.00 News as we ate our Italian-style Chicken Principessa from M&S. We were lucky enough to catch it again at 7, and then at 9 and 10. Mr Kinnock obviously thought he had trapped me with a trick question, when he asked: "When is the recession going to end?" Quick as a flash I jumped to my feet and read off my clipboard: "Asking that question shows that you are not fit to run this country." All our people cheered and cheered at this brilliant reply, and afterwards Mr Mellor gave me a wink and said

"Well done, John. Looks like those old shrimp boats of yours could be coming in at last."

POETRY CORNER

Lines Written By
The Poet Laureate
To Celebrate 40 Years
Of The Reign Of Her
Majesty Queen
Elizabeth II

The Lion And The Unicorn

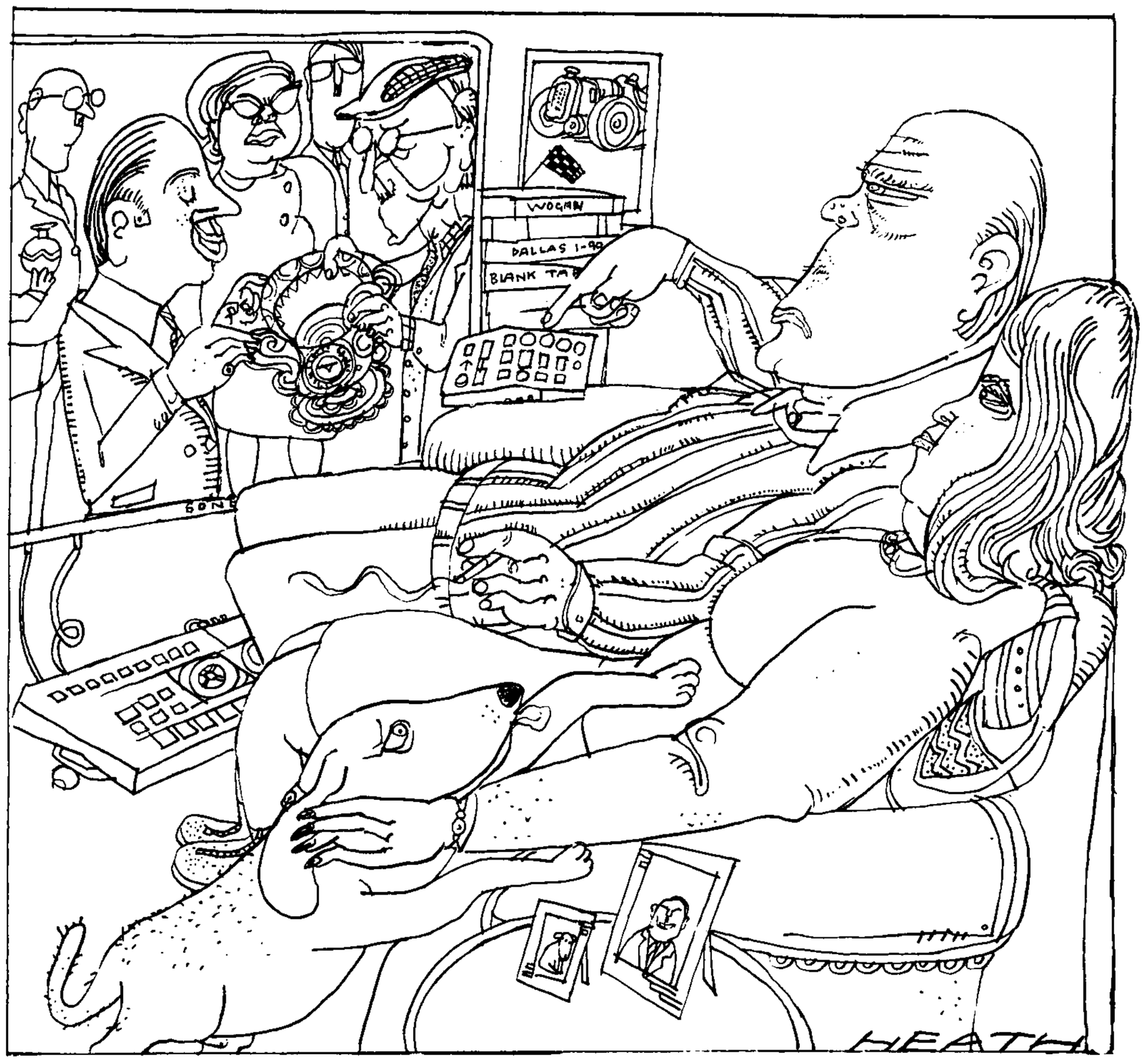
Unicorn. Gentle
Erect, vulnerable.
Grazing.
Silver horn glistens
In sun.
Corkscrew-like.

Lion in bushes.
Golden mane, mangy
Roar.
Spring. Rip. Tear.
Teeth sink into soft belly.

Unicorn squeals.
Too late. Blood, guts.
Gush. Grisly.
Lion chews.
Only horn left.

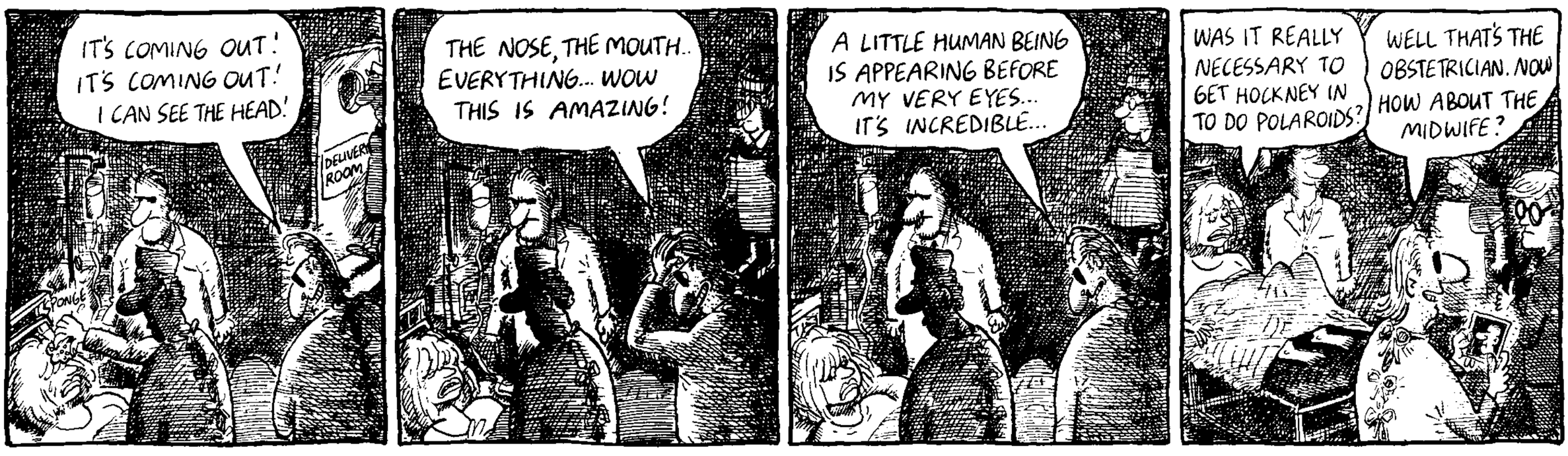
Happy anniversary,
Ma'am.

(Is this bad enough? TH)

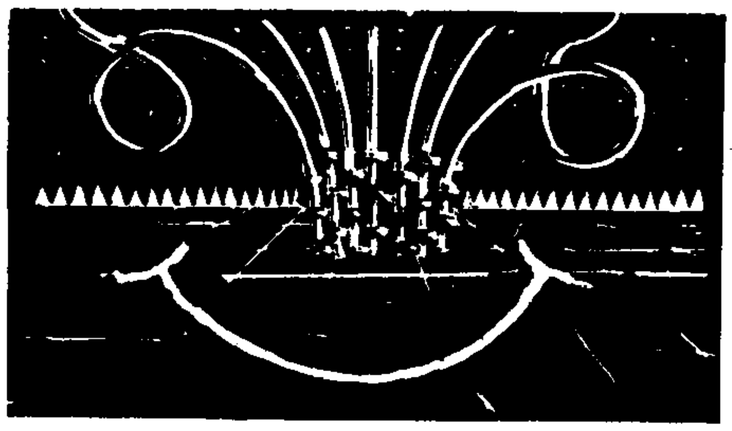


Great Bores Of Today.

"... you say your great-aunt was given it as a wedding present when she was in India? that's very interesting because a lot of these were made in Germany at that time at the turn of the century you can see on the base where it says 'Made in Germany' and this little arrow means it comes from the Frankfurt factory it's quite delightful isn't it? with this little floral pattern on the rim d'you know they used to use them to put soap in in India because otherwise it melted in the sun that's why I was so interested to hear about your great-aunt being in India of course if it was used as a goldfish bowl as you say that would explain these rather unattractive stains normally at auction one of these would fetch two hundred? three hundred? but without the lid I'm afraid..."


IT'S COMING OUT! IT'S COMING OUT! I CAN SEE THE HEAD!
DELIVERY ROOM
SPONGE
THE NOSE, THE MOUTH.. EVERYTHING... WOW THIS IS AMAZING!
A LITTLE HUMAN BEING IS APPEARING BEFORE MY VERY EYES... IT'S INCREDIBLE...
WAS IT REALLY NECESSARY TO GET HOCKNEY IN TO DO POLAROIDS?
WELL THAT'S THE OBSTETRICIAN. NOW HOW ABOUT THE MIDWIFE?

DIARY



P.J. O'ROURKE

Biduk-biduk-biduk. ***Phuttaphuttaphutta.*** Biduk-biduk-biduk. ***Phuttaphuttaphutta.*** You know the fuck what that's the fucking sound of? Fuck your ass, you do. Biduk-biduk-biduk. ***Phuttaphuttaphutta.*** Biduk-biduk-biduk. ***Phuttaphuttaphutta.*** Its the oh-so-clever smartass sound I make when I can't think of anything funny to write, needledick.

They say I'm the funniest writer in America. Not the funniest ***waiter*** or the funniest ***whiter*** — whatever that may be, screw you, fuckface — or the funniest ***water*** but the funniest writer! F-U-N-N-I-E-S-T W-R-I-T-E-R, goddit, noodlejerk? I was over in your rainsoaked dime of a country to prove it on your chat shows last fall and to say I had 'em howling would not, I repeat ***not*** be an insult to howling.

"You know what that Marilyn Quayle looks like?" I said on your *Wogan* show, all set to let the 9m audience into one of my best wet-your-pants jokes. "I said, you know what that Marilyn Quayle looks like?"

"Before you tell us, P.J.," Wogan butted in, "perhaps you'd better fill us in on who Marilyn Quayle is, exactly."

"Right, right," I said, stifling my chuckles, "Marilyn Quayle's the wife of Dan Quayle. And you know what she looks like, do you? Well, I'll tell you..."

"I'm sure we're all dyin' to be told," said Wogan, "but first, it might just be worth explaining to viewers who might not know, exactly who Dan Quayle is."

"Sure," I said — and by this time to say I was pissing my pants would be an insult to pant-pissers everywhere — "Dan Quayle is our Vice-President, and to say that he was thick would be an insult to... to... things that are thick. So, I'm telling you, Marilyn Quayle looks just like a..."

"So, to be sure, it's the Vice-President's wife we're talking about — I'm right there, am I?" said Wogan.

"Right. And in my book I say that she looks like a Water Buffalo!!!!!! In fact, to say she looks like a Water Buffalo would be an insult to Water Buffaloes!!!!!!"

"And tell us," smiled Wogan, "what dos a Water Buffalo look like exactly?"

It's jokes like the Marilyn Quayle one — she looks like a Water Buffalo! — that have earned me the title of America's Funniest Humorist. But I'm not ***just*** a humorist. Oh, no, sirreee! To say that I'm just a humorist would not be not be so much not right as utterly wrong: R-O-N-G! I'm a chronicler of our times, using humour as a scalpel on society. Wasn't it Horace who said: "What stops a man who can laugh from speaking the truth?" Or was it "tooth"?!! And you're looking at that man now, baby. Lemme demonstrate what I mean by "Funniest Man in the Universe" by applying my technique to your own two-bit political set-up in England, home of the toffee-nose limey poofter, haven for the Ostentatiously Poor and the Social Security Trillionaire:

Neil Kinnock: As bald as the bass-drum at a Guns 'n Roses gig, to say the guy's a windbag is an insult to windbags, goddammit!

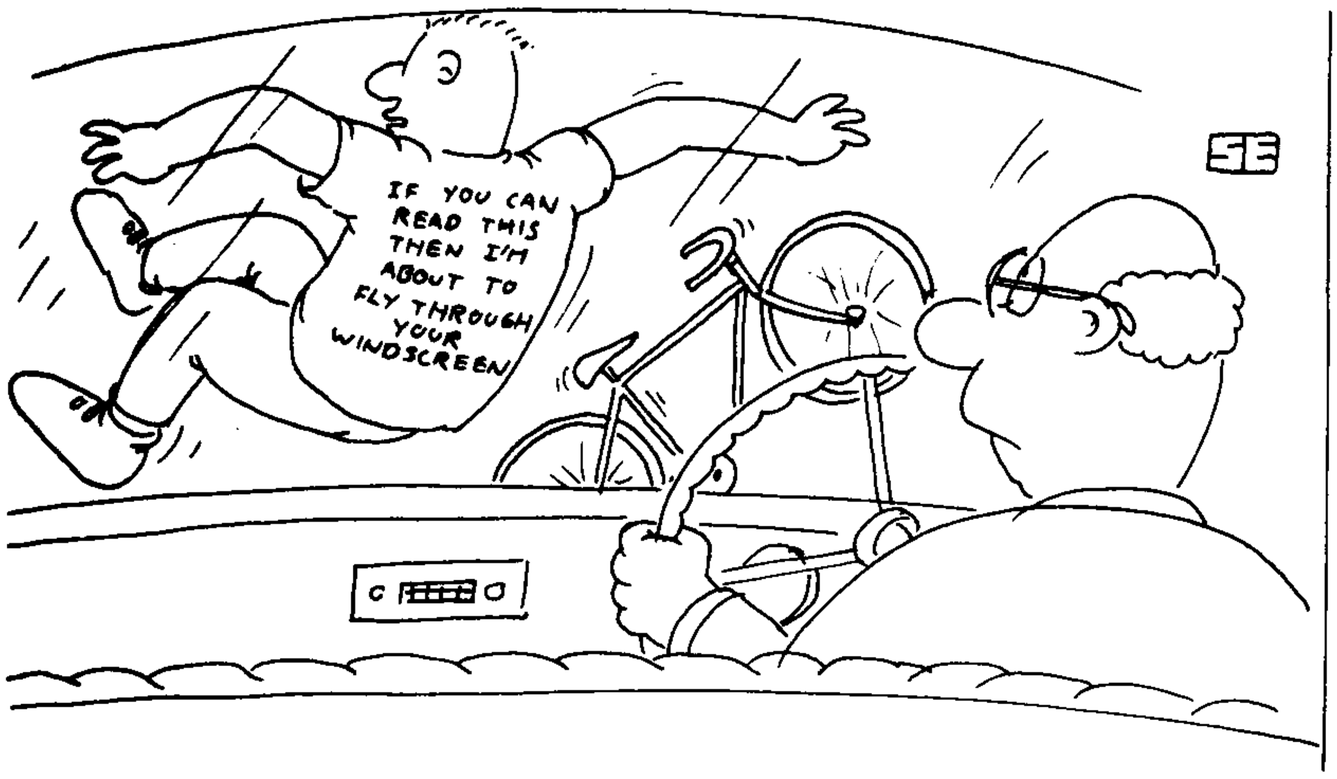
John Major: What the fucking fuck the hell with goddamn asshole who gives a shit? Take dope? ***You bet I do, crazy ass!*** And I've scored some pretty nifty chicks in my time too, some of them with as much power in their thighs as a two thousand pound command-detonated motherfucker Scud missile launched on five thousand hankie-heads and sandmouths in Iraq. But what about this John Major? He's as goddamn boring as queuing for tickets for a Madonna concert and then finally discovering when you reach the ticket box they've run out and she doesn't plan any more concerts for a year due to exhaustion, that's how boring John Major is.

SeewhaddImean? These aren't just ordinary jokes, they're jokes that ***reveal the truth about those who would seek to govern us and about human life in general, the truth that all men and women in the USA are worthy of God's love and are thankful to live in the Land of the Free.*** If this lone humorist has to shock, to outrage, to tear the whole goddamn place apart in some mad-dash-sweat-pounding-far-out-biduk-biduk-bid uk-hyphenated-synonymic-scramble in order to proclaim the truth, then that's what he's gonna do, fatface. And no goddam nigger-loving hymie sauerkraut-eating bidet-slooshing bastard sono-fabitch is gonna stop him.

Myself, I've been around, but I'll tell you this, and that's for free, sure it is, baby, and I'm not one to mess around, no way, but this I will tell you, once, twice, ten zillion times: I'll never forget — ***never*** — how to get away with spinning out a sentence — see it spin, daddio! — by placing more words in it than it deserves and thereby fooling airheads and napkinbrains into believing that it's not just ***humorous*** but ***hippppppp and reeeelly kooooollll!!***

Ethiopia, Schmethiopia, so they're poor and starving, huh? Biiiiiig deal. They're still not fashionable, not by any cast-iron American standards. No food? Know how they feel. Hell, I've waited over twenty-five minutes to get served at Sardi's, but I don't go whining about it to NBC and walking around in the sand with all my clothes off!!! What the fuck? Like, they're so thin they make Ivana Trump look like, look like, look like — yeah, look like she wasn't very thin! I took the airplane to Ethiopia, one famine before last. Let's just say it wasn't exactly Disneyworld!!! I mean, these guys didn't even speak ***English.*** No wonder they never got to get their main course — the waitress obviously didn't understand 'em!!! And those babies crying their little non-white heads off like Donald Duck just zapped his wonger in one of their moms! Give me Santa Monica any day, with a Pina Colada, a top-heavy chick, a club sandwich, some drugs — yeah, you could say I took drugs! — a nice clean white shirt and some red-hot American hi-guys-howyadoin ***service***!

I suppose you could call me outrageous. That's what they've always called guys who've laughed in the face of untruth. But say what you like about America — and I'll admit we have our fair share of flag-desecrators, welfare-malingerers, wilfully one-legged, Johnny-No-Eyes, liberal-bedwetters, hairy-armed-feminist-lesbian-terrorists and cross-patch-rape-victims — there's really No Place Like Home. And to say that that's not an outrageous thought is, you might say, an insult to outrageous thoughts! So it's over and out from the funniest guy in the world! Biduk-biduk-biduk, ***phutta-phuttaphutta.***



The World seems to have forgotten them in their misery. There is still some aid coming in. Geoffrey Archer, the famous novelist, adventurer, parliamentarian and philanderer was in the region last week bringing welcome aid from Great Britain.

Briefing Ankara

Shortly afterwards Mr Peet — then a young curate — met him in a homosexual bar. "I used to go there", the vicar admits, "just to be in genial company, relax, be myself. I think today there are more gay organisations, but in those days one was groping in the gloom for comfort and support."

The Times

Literary Review

Not so cunning stunts

The Literary Companion to Sex
Ed. Fiona Pitt-Kethley
(Sinclair-Stevenson, £18)

HERE, for St Valentine's Day, is something atrociously British. We are perhaps the only nation in Europe still prudish enough to find the mere idea of a woman talking dirty irresistibly exciting.

Fiona Pitt-Kethley's career has been based entirely on the fact that, though a woman, she can be as smutty as a man. Otherwise her writing is devoid of interest: flat-footed and cloth-eared. If her scrawls about blowjobs were signed by a man, they would never have been published more extensively than on a lavatory door.

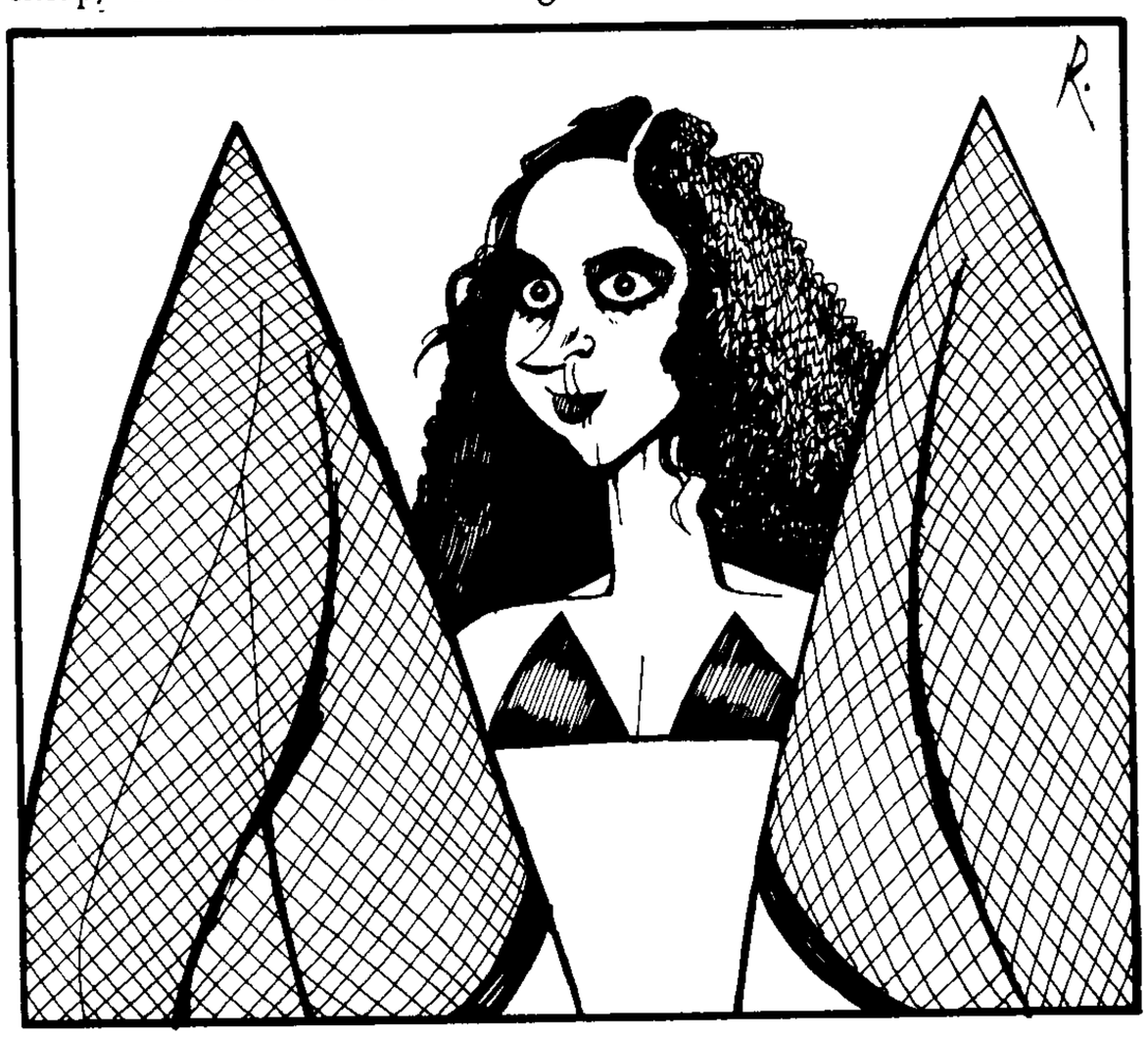
But there are still men who thrill to simple proof that *women do it too*. Philip Roth caught this adolescent emotion nicely in *Portnoy's Complaint*: "Amazing! Astonishing! Still can't get over the fantastic idea that when you are looking at a girl, you are looking at somebody who is guaranteed to have on her — a cunt! *They all have cunts!* Right under their dresses! Cunts — for fucking!"

This is exactly the level on which Fiona Pitt-Kethley's works are enjoyed, by those who enjoy them — notably her great patron, Karl Miller. Famously, Fiona Pitt-Kethley received 85 rejection slips before she managed to get a poem published. Her career was eventually founded on repeated appearances in the academic magazine, the *London Review of Books*. Its editor, Karl Miller, was so excited by the idea that a woman could talk as basely about sex as a man (Amazing! Astonishing! etc) that all other criteria were abandoned. Week after week, reviews about anthropology or jurisprudence were studded with little anecdotes about sex worthy of Bernard Manning or 2 Live Crew.

Pitt-Kethley nonetheless pretends to believe that her sexual explicitness has held her back. "Yes, I've always been treated unfairly because of my frankness," she said recently. "Women have always talked dirty — to each other. Some men feel it slightly threatening when they see it in print."

And she has the gall to maintain that she's generally been done down in her career because she's a woman.

But — ironee! — her sex is certainly the sole reason she's ever hit print. In *Manifesto of a Female Casanova*, she announced "Sex is a constant pleasure. As with anything else, experience makes you more skilled," and "I'm exceptionally discriminating. I only have it off with good-looking partners. I'm not cheap, I'm free." These exciting remarks were thought deserving of the front page of the *Independent*'s Saturday review. But imagine them coming from a man — they wouldn't even earn a laugh in a pub. Yet Pitt-Kethley, poet, sails on. The *Guardian* has recently given her a column — "Ars Amatoria" — for further felicities of this order.



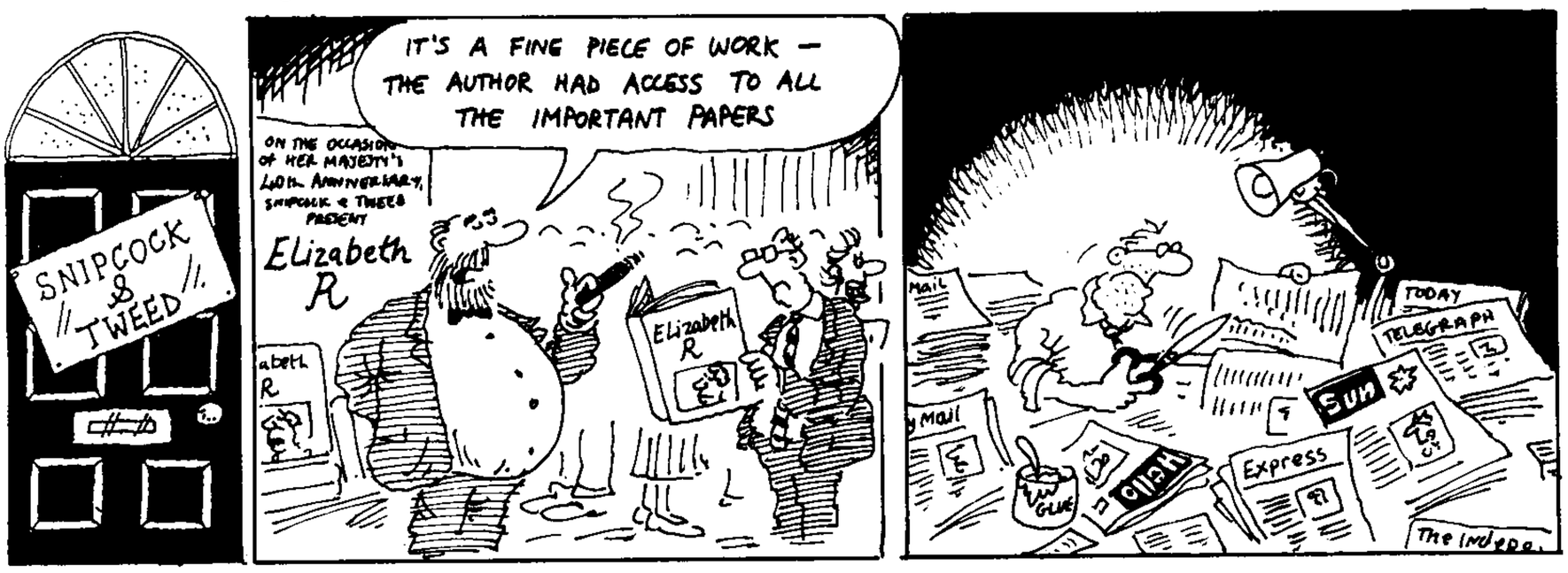
And here we have her personal anthology of mucky bits ("Every book and every poem has its orgasm or high point... What I have tried to do is collect together all these orgasms to make one long orgiastic read.")

Originally commissioned by Hamish Hamilton, it was rejected when delivered. Why? According to Fiona, it was because it featured too many perversions — in other words, it was too exciting. So it's been issued instead by Sinclair-Stevenson, the embarrassing independent publisher recently taken over by Reed International. And the real reason's clear: it's too boring and badly done.

The choice of passages manages to include much that's over obvious (*To His Coy Mistress, Lady Chatterley's Lover*) yet excludes both the great (Keats, Tennyson, Browning, Pope, Joyce) and the contemporary (Heller, Mailer, Beckett, Auden, Larkin, Martin Amis). Instead, there are wretched anecdotes about a Chinese man peeing in a girl's mouth, three poems by the awful Jeremy Reed, and verse of this order: "I am a penis,/the masculine totem./My base is a bag/that is known as the scrotum... I am a penis,/a bit of a card,/mostly quite soft/but at times rather hard." A snip at eighteen quid, eh?

Fiona has translated many of the classics represented herself, or handed them over to her mum, Olive Pitt-Kethley, thus reducing these to the true Pitt-Kethley note ("Why don't I kiss you? You're bald as a coot/Why don't I kiss you? You're bright red to boot/Why don't I kiss you? You've only one eye/Kissing you'd just be a blow job, that's why" — Martial, don't you know.)

As sexiness goes, this ain't much, but in Britain it'll do. The reason people here sit glued to their televisions, watching adaptations of Melvyn Bragg or Fay Weldon, is solely in the patient hope of seeing a little sex. Everybody knows this, few admit it. Just dress sex up as culture and you can sell it to us. Even in the form of Fiona Pitt-Kethley. We're *desperate*.


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
IT'S A FINE PIECE OF WORK — THE AUTHOR HAD ACCESS TO ALL THE IMPORTANT PAPERS
ON THE OCCASION OF HER MAJESTY'S 40th ANNIVERSARY, SNIPCOCK & TWEED PRESENT
Elizabeth R
Mail
TODAY
TELEGRAPH
Sun
Express
The Indep.

Books & Bookmen

☐ **ST VALENTINE'S Day is the third anniversary of the *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie. Coincidentally, or not, Viking Penguin has agreed to relinquish the right to publish *The Satanic Versus* in paperback.**

The great novel will be brought out in the United States in paperback by a consortium of publishers and writers under the auspices of the Authors' Guild. It would be good to think that there might be some similar corporate activity in the UK: perhaps the Society of Authors and the Writers' Guild here might vie with each other for the honour of publishing the paperback? The Guild might be regarded as the more appropriate organisation as it awarded Solomon a prize last year for his latest fiction.

■ *ANTHONY LOMAS, the Price Waterhouse administrator of Macdonald, and its Scribners, Futura and Abacus imprints, is brilliantly pulling the wool over the publishing world's eyes, and legally — because Cap'n Bob's watery boat is in administration, not receivership — he is able to get away with it.*

While protesting that steps towards the sale of the company are proceeding swimmingly, he has now sacked 36 employees, including the meticulous and well-liked Abacus editorial director, Mary Loring, and managed to achieve this without there being any question of the tearful 36 receiving by way of compensation, for years of service rendered, more than the minimum redundancy cheques.

Clearly no sane publisher would want to acquire the complete and expensive chaos of Macdonald and its debts, with or without the pension fund. All that any suitor would wish to buy, with or without the authors' blessing, are the few contracts of the authors who make money. Yet if royalties aren't paid by, appropriately, April Fool's Day, Macdonald will no longer have the right to the authors. Thus Lomas has to sell something, and pass the debts on, pretty quickly.

It is likely that a deal will be stitched up with Little, Brown, the Boston publishers desperate to make their presence felt here who published the Prince of Wales' Watercolours last year; Macdonald's managing director, Philippa Harrison, would like this to happen too as her employment would thus be continued. She turned down Little, Brown a year ago to take the Cap'n's shilling.

☐ THE Publishers' Association, desperate to maintain some credibility in the face of the steady erosion of its beloved net book agreement and the twitchy departure from its corporate ranks of previously loyal firms, has come up with a new — or rather old — Stalinist method of packing its council with faces it likes.

Until this year any representative of any member firm could nominate any other member for a place on the council, or even themselves. This they can still do, but the odds against their being elected under the new system are stacked. The council will now nominate precisely the number of people there are vacancies for, and those time-servers it wants.

'Bookworm'

POLICE 5

McKnackered

SCOTTISH solicitor John Corrigan has urged the Crown Office to investigate the conduct of Adam Hay, who until 1990 was a detective chief inspector in charge of Dumbarton divisional CID.

This follows three separate criminal cases which Hay brought against Corrigan and which resulted in Corrigan being acquitted. Corrigan, who as a criminal defence lawyer had a reputation for successfully opposing police evidence, believes Hay was pursuing a vendetta against him.

Some years ago Corrigan successfully defended a client in an armed robbery case, a source of police resentment which began with Corrigan's car being persistently stopped by police on spurious grounds — at least 30 times in two years.

In 1987 Corrigan was tried for allegedly suborning witnesses to give false evidence. In 1989 he was accused of drunken driving. He was acquitted in both cases, while last November he was acquitted of a perjury charge at the end of a 16-day trial at Glasgow high court.

The perjury case concerned the evidence that Corrigan and another man, David Connolly, had given in the drink-driving trial. The prosecution had argued that Corrigan had been drunk when he drove away in June 1988 from a wedding reception at the Commodore Hotel in Helensburgh.

Corrigan claimed to have phoned for a taxi to take him home and that he was intending to share it with Connolly. While waiting for the taxi, Corrigan went to his car to collect his baby son's teething gel, whereupon he was arrested by two police officers. The taxi driver, who had arrived at just that moment, witnessed the arrest and gave evidence in the drink-driving trial. He too was subsequently charged with perjury, though the case against him did not proceed to trial.

The recent perjury trial gave rise to some extraordinary contradictions of evidence.

For example, Sheriff John Fitzsimons, who had presided at the drink-driving trial, told the court that he had ejected Adam Hay from his office after Hay had demanded to know why Corrigan had been acquitted. Fitzsimons explained: "He had no right to ask such a question, and in my view what he was doing was improper. I was flabbergasted and immediately reported it to the [procurator] fiscal. No one had ever approached me like that before." Hay claimed that he had made an appointment to see the sheriff at his chambers and had merely asked him whether he had "kept good notes of the trial".

Part of Hay's case against Corrigan concerned four Strathclyde drugs squad officers who had coincidentally been staking out the Commodore Hotel and had taken photographs, some of which included Corrigan. Hay said that he had met his four fellow police officers at two meetings in his Dumbarton office. Mysteriously, however, they denied the meetings had taken place.

More disturbing was the evidence that Hay had attempted to persuade other witnesses to perjure themselves so as to prove that Corrigan was a perjurer. The taxi driver, Patrick Campbell, for instance, told the court that in the course of an interview Hay had alternately threatened him and offered him inducements to make an incriminating statement against Corrigan, which Hay would compose. Hay's version of the interview was that he had been seeking to establish Campbell's correct address.

Another interesting aspect was the witness who was never called. In a pre-trial hearing, Corrigan had cited the home advocate depute, Roderick MacDonald QC, as a potential defence witness. Corrigan claimed that MacDonald had offered a deal to his co-accused David Connolly whereby, if he gave evidence incriminating Corrigan, the case against him would be dropped. However, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, appeared before Lord MacLean to argue that any such proposed deals were confidential and as a result MacDonald was spared the embarrassment of having to give testimony.

Adam Hay retired from the Strathclyde police force last June, several months before the perjury trial, while Corrigan has been unable to continue in practice as a solicitor in Dumbarton because of the shadow of criminal charges. He has instead been driving a taxi. Had he been convicted of perjury, he faced up to 10 years in prison; so he naturally feels the Crown Office should consider bringing a similar charge against Hay.

Labour pains

WHILE the Alison Halford affair (see *Eyes passim*) has become a *cause célèbre* — discussed by ministers of Cabinet rank in the Tory party — over at the Labour Party Neil Kinnock is reputedly "hopping mad" at the actions of George Bundred and Harry Rimmer in persisting with disciplinary charges against the assistant chief constable of Murkeyside.

No doubt this will be one of the first matters the minister for women will have to deal with if we ever get a Labour government.

Former Scargill aide and Livingstonite Steven Bundred, meanwhile, is equally embarrassed by the actions of his old man and hopes that the "sins of the father" won't be visited on a son seeking to advance himself in the Peoples' Party.

The current view on Murkeyside is that the police authority has dug itself into a hole the size of the Mersey tunnel, with no visible means of escape. The MPA might not be "out of control", as its former head Lady Margaret Symie suggested (*Eye* 787), but the Halford affair and other antics make it appear less of a public watchdog and more of a poodle.

ARMS NEWS

The booby (trap) prize

HOW HAS the British company Royal Ordnance been faring in its unenviable task of clearing up unexploded bombs and mines in war-ravaged Kuwait?

Eye readers will recall how the cause of Royal Ordnance (prop: British Aerospace) was pushed hard by the Government to the detriment of all other British firms. The size of RO's parent meant financial guarantees could be given for contractual purposes, while the Kuwaitis had the added assurance that, should there be any problems, the government department sponsoring RO would stand four square behind its chosen contractor.

While the parent has had problems with the City — a meltdown in several of its business sectors does not bode well — RO has suffered at least two deaths and several serious injuries in the Gulf. Some sub-contracted British workers have broken their contracts, and RO is now starting to engage ex-Gurkha military engineers who are cheaper to employ and have blind loyalty to ex-British officers.

Several senior UK-based RO administrative staff were recently travelling in a "cleared" area in Kuwait when one of the two vehicles in their convoy struck a buried object which exploded. A Mr Caine, the senior commercial officer, needed a change of underwear (lucky man), while a senior finance man needed to be evacuated to the UK with facial injuries, from which he still suffers.

In military terms the injured men were the type of people who should have been kept well away from such a potential danger. It is highly unlikely that the vehicles they were driving come with armour plating. They were Land Rover Discoveries, made with added sweetener by a well-known RO sister company.

A Mr Blagden has now been sent from RO in the UK to "sort out" a variety of safety and operational problems in the Gulf and to get the project back on course and thus make some profit for its needy parent company.

With all the brouhaha in the City about British Aerospace, the size and progress of this key Royal Ordnance contract has scarcely received a mention. Could it be that any bad news from the Gulf would further depress an already shaky share price? Surely not.

WHILE Royal Ordnance toils, other contractors face bigger problems: the Egyptian military mine clearers are dying on a regular basis.

In the last three months of 1991, the Egyptian brigadier in charge and his driver were killed when their vehicle hit a mine in an area apparently "cleared" by their own men.

The lucky contractor in the US sector, meanwhile — a company called CMS — will soon start work. CMS is owned by the US subsidiary of a West German company, MBB, which is itself owned by Mercedes. And guess who is a major shareholder in Mercedes? The Kuwait Investment Office! Did any other US contractor stand any chance of this contract?

Meanwhile the UK company Passive Barriers was issued with a letter of intent from the Kuwaiti government to replace one of the Moslem countries whose workers had yet to make any meaningful progress in clearing their mined area. In spite of help from Michael Mates MP, nothing more has been heard. But then in Kuwait a letter of intent is only a letter. If your agent is Faisal Masood — and Passive Barriers' agent was not — the chance of a contract award might have been higher.

BRITISH AEROSPACE

Visibly sheiken

PRINCE BANDAR, the Saudi ambassador to Washington, visited John Major recently (*Eye* 783) to discuss the huge Al Yamama project in Saudi Arabia. The project is in trouble and British Aerospace with it.

Billed as the largest arms deal of all time, Al Yamama involves a purchase by the Saudis of British weapons worth in excess of some £15 billion. It is a deal coveted by the Americans and the French.

The method of payment was to be by oil, sold on the open market and the proceeds banked at Lloyd's in favour of BAe. However, the Saudis are pumping some 500,000 barrels per day and will not increase the amount, and British Aerospace needs more money to complete the project as falling oil prices and kick-backs have seriously depleted its cash flow.

The Saudis are not happy, however, because there are delays in construction. So unhappy are they, in fact, that prior to the visit of Bandar, King Fahd had written to Tom King, the defence secretary, to complain. Fahd pointed out that the 500,000 barrels per day was the maximum they would pump and wickedly suggested that unless BAe bucked up its ideas in the construction of the airports he would divert 100,000 bpd to another contractor to speed up the process.

This produced near panic in Whitehall and BAe and John Major's meeting with Bandar was designed to smooth out the problems. The outcome is awaited with interest.

AIRLINE SECURITY

BA achieves FA...

THE lessons of Lockerbie have still to be learned by British Airways: for the fourth time since the Pan Am atrocity BA has allowed legally required security measures to be breached.

On Thursday 23 January, a Boeing 757 was prevented from taking off from Heathrow's terminal one by furious government safety inspectors. They had earlier placed a fake bomb, in the form of a jiffy pack together with a warning note, in one of the overhead passenger lockers of the main cabin.

The test was supposed to have proved that security at the airport is as tight as possible, although even the most cursory of searches should have unearthed the package. But despite stringent legal requirements relating to pre-flight checks, BA flunked the test completely.

Having placed the package on the plane, the transport department inspectors retired to a nearby office, confidently expecting a phone call from BA to tell them that the "device" had been found. As time passed, however, the horrified officials realised that the flight, BA4652 to (of all places) Belfast International Airport, had been cleared by the airline for take-off with the fake bomb undetected on board.

Indeed, the first BA knew about its unauthorised cargo was when the inspectors turned up at gate 49 and halted the departure until the package was removed.

This is the fourth serious breach to have come to light in the last two years. Apart from Lockerbie campaigner Dr Jim Swire's carrying of a replica bomb on a flight to America going undetected, the airline was also embarrassed when two other transport department test packages were overlooked at Manchester airport. Manchester was also the scene of an unfortunate incident in December 1990 when two BA pilots joked about having a bomb on board a plane they had just flown in from Ireland.

The ill-fated Heathrow inspection was the first opportunity for the government inspectors to review the performance of Aviation Defence, the firm now responsible for security at British Airways. The previous scares (and, of course, BA's disastrous decision to allow a Boeing 747 to land in Kuwait after the Iraqi invasion) happened before last July when the airline privatised its security service.

The change followed a review carried out by ex-SAS second-in-command and Military Cross holder (for undisclosed work in the Middle East) Alastair Morrison, the head of security consultants Defence Systems Ltd. This review impressed BA's chairman, Lord King, so much that BA invited Morrison and his associates to manage the new off-shoot, the creation of which they themselves had recommended.

The months since Aviation Defence became a separate company have seen the former BA security staff engaged in fights against redundancies and the introduction of new lower pay scales and poorer working conditions. Applications to industrial tribunals have also become a regular feature of life for security staff who assume that Aviation Defence will soon be sold-off to a private sector firm with no background in aviation. Securicor has already made inroads into the potentially lucrative area of airport security.

ORKNEY ABUSE

Not so bonny and Clyde

THE "ritual abuse" inquiry into the snatching of nine children from their beds in Orkney last February has been graced by the appearance before Lord Clyde of Liz Mclean, the worker from the Royal Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (RSSPCC) who was also involved in the famous Rochdale fiasco.

Mclean told a harrowing tale of how the poor mites voluntarily poured out terrible tales of torment. This, however, contrasted sharply with the children's evidence that was heard last week.

Dr John Powell, a consultant psychiatrist, appeared on their behalf, though he explained that three of the children had expressed a wish to appear themselves — including a nine year-old girl who said she was determined to "say her piece".

Dr Powell told the inquiry that without exception the children had said that their removal into care was completely unexpected. Some of them went on to tell tales of tugs-of-war between parents and social workers, and some of the younger ones said they still had no idea why they were taken.

The inquiry heard that all the children had said:

- They were deeply upset because they were not allowed to say goodbye to their parents;
- Their "places of safety" seemed ill prepared — one social worker spent more than two hours driving around in circles trying to find the appointed place;
- Social workers would not believe the children when they said that they had not been abused and kept insisting that they had;
- The "spontaneous" drawings described by Liz Mclean and most of the social workers were first of all drawn by interviewers — an eight year-old boy told how his interviewers drew a ring with someone in the middle and asked him "Did you see it? Who was in the middle. Do you like the minister?" The same boy went on to say that his interviewers had said bad things about his parents and had done bad things to him.

Earlier the inquiry had welcomed for several days the figure of Gordon Sloan, the acting reporter to the children's panel at the time of the snatches. Sloan was given the opportunity to deny the descriptions of him which were given by the parents involved: these ranged from despotic and tyrannical to mentally disturbed. During his rebuttal the inquiry was treated to the spectacle of the acting reporter denying tyrannical behaviour to a QC who suffered it.

During a children's panel hearing held while the snatched children were still in care, the families tried desperately to introduce recently obtained medical reports which showed that there was no evidence whatsoever of sexual — or any other kind — of abuse. Sloan would have none of it; and when the families' representatives tried to insist, they were told that they would be ejected if the reports were mentioned again.

Sloan told the inquiry that he considered the reports irrelevant and went on to say that he would have considered them irrelevant even if they had shown that the children *had* been abused. The mind boggles.

Following the path trod by every social worker who has so far appeared before Lord Clyde, Sloan complained about media coverage and suggested that in future they should be prohibited from reporting similar cases.

No doubt they would all have liked to have suppressed the story that appeared in the local paper last week about the return of the Kirkwall grammar school bus to the village of St Margaret's Hope — the home of the snatched children.

When the bus got to The Hope, as it's known, it was stopped and boarded by Inspector McKnacker, who asked if a certain boy was on board. The boy cannot be named as he was one of the children removed from his bed last year, as all on the bus knew.

Perhaps for the first time in history, a school bus fell silent as the boy in question walked slowly to the front. When he got there he was handed an item of lost property. When the inevitable protests against this method of returning lost property was made, McKnacker made a statement to the effect that things didn't happen in the way described — ie all the children on the bus had been lying.

One can only admire the courage of social workers and police who continue to work in Orkney despite the number of conspiracies in operation against them.

HEALTH NEWS

Qa: more ques than answers

THE fatcat lifestyle of directors Business Services (see *Eyes pa* finally emerging despite the silenc creator, Sir James Ackers, chairm West Midlands Health Authority.

The firm was created in 1989 by priva authority's computer services division, for NHS workers into the private sector. It wer receivership last September owing more th million and making 300 redundant, its man owing £300,000 of public money to the hea authority for the original £750,000 buy-out.

Former staff probing the books have fou while they were being laid off, directors were drawing £80,000 salaries, running a fleet of 2 BMWs for them and their wives, and filling the drinks cabinets with champagne in a bid to con prospective buyers of Qa's profitability. Ackers role in the collapse has also emerged: it was the authority's decision to withdraw a contract that sen Qa over the brink.

To add insult to injury, the workers found that finance director Peter Brown had retired claiming ill-health a couple of weeks before the receivership, taking a £90,000 lump sum from the pension fund, plus £30,000 a year. Within days he was running his own business and had won a £50,000 contract through his old mates at the health authority.

Staff who lost their jobs have been told their pensions will be less than half what they were promised. About 40 of them have put together a fighting fund and another 20 are taking action for unfair dismissal against Qa and AT&T Istel, who bought it out of receivership. (Another Qa director, Ian McCallum, quit just before receivership and reappeared at AT&T the day Qa went bust.)

Ackers, a close friend of ex-health minister Kenneth Clarke, and a would-be Tory parliamentary candidate who was rejected by countless constituencies, has refused to comment saying it is Qa's affair. His own firm, Ackers Jarrett, went bust just before Qa, but his friends in government believe the a failed businessman, privatiser and would-be parliamentarian is still the best person to run Britain's biggest health authority: last year he was reappointed for an unprecedented third term.

SELLAFIELD

Leak soup

MEDICAL researchers who are still trying to find a link between the incidence of leukaemia around Sellafield and the operations of the nuclear reprocessing plant could do worse than spend a morning at the Public Records Office.

Documents just released under the 30-year rule reveal that a punctured evaporator in the plutonium-extracting plant spilled 50 grammes of the lethal substance into the surrounding environment on 19 June 1961.

There were two separate leaks from the tank. The first sent 20 grammes of plutonium in liquid nitrate form into the River Calder, from where it was sucked up into the cooling system of the B reactor of the Calder Hall nuclear power station. Having been vaporised, it would then have been vented into the atmosphere from the station's cooling tower.

The second leak was diverted down a foul-water drain and contaminated 30,000 quare yards of beach between the rivers Ehen and Calder. In some parts, the level of plutonium contamination was 20 times the maximum permitted level.

The leak of such quantities of highly radioactive material — the amount was millions of times the maximum permitted human intake — is serious enough. What is even worse is that the loss was *within* the authorised daily discharge limit from the plant's radioactive effluent pipeline at the time.

in the City

G is clearly very rotten in the state of tion. All at once the wheels are com- rom the brave new world of ex- ation and prosecution promised by the erious Fraud Office and the other re- six years ago by the Roskill Com-

this is happening as SFO director leparts to be Director of Public he ambitious self-publicist will not be crash happens.

er she took over in September 1990 sh from a result in Guinness One, idently: "It can no longer be said that the cannot cope with prosecuting serious vely and efficiently."

fidence could be severely dented by ie long-running Blue Arrow and Barlow s, a decision on whether Guinness Two the wake of the collapse of Guinness the start of the long and winding road for k's Asil Nadir towards his Old Bailey date . Already these four prosecutions have in big red letters that the post-Roskill system orking.

ud trials are too long, too complex, too costly o late — Guinness was in 1986, Blue Arrow and Barlow Clowes 1988. The situation now is orse than that which Roskill sought to change. During 1979 to 1983, the number of Old Bailey ud trials lasting more than 12 weeks totalled just ght out of 50 that took more than a month. The ongest was 137 days, two others lasted more than 100 days. Celebrated fraud trials of earlier years, such as the State Building Society and Emil Savundra, needed 50 days or less. Blue Arrow required 183 days; Barlow Clowes 108; Guinness One 113; and Guinness Two, only a tenth of the way through the prosecution case, is already approaching 60 days.

What is the reason? Overloaded indictments with excessive charges are one major factor. Although trial judges slim these down, the end result can still be massive overkill. SFO lawyers, many trained in civil rather than criminal proceedings, claim wide-ranging and often alternative charges are necessary to prove method/system and scale. But the convicted fraudsman is unlikely to get a heavier sentence for stealing £10 million than for making £100 million disappear.

More charges mean more documents. The word is that the SFO case against Nadir, who faces 72 charges, runs to 300 volumes encasing some *one million* pages. While there may be tactical reasons — such as the need to obtain documents from foreign jurisdictions — for such a legal blunderbuss, no case with that amount of paperwork is manageable. No wonder experts like the former Lord Justice Lawton call for shorter indictments. If you can't convict on the best six or ten shots, what kind of case do you have?

Back in 1988 Judge James Rant, once tipped for the SFO post, warned after acquitting three defendants in a fraud trial: "If documents accumulate and evidence piles up, a trial judge may have to say that the case must come to an end simply because the task of deciding it is beyond the grasp of any jury." Clearly no one at the SFO was listening.

Just what the jury made of the remarkable admission by the Blue Arrow trial judge Mr Justice McKinnon that at times he "felt overwhelmed by the evidence" remains to be seen; but it, like the non-appearance of Blue Arrow chief executive Tony Berry, may not have exactly helped the prosecution case. But then neither has the judge's earlier acquittal of five defendants.

And what might the jurors in Guinness Two make of another part of the Mills legacy, the curious decision to announce that the SFO was not to proceed against Roger Seelig in Guinness Three while they are still hearing evidence against him?

More documents mean more witnesses and more examination and cross-examination. Days crawl by while minute points of little or no relevance to guilt or innocence are gone over repeatedly. The lame legal excuse is that the jury might miss or not understand a point. But barristers have no incentive to be concise. On the contrary, they receive "refreshers". (A lawyer writes: "A refresher is where a barrister goes into a small cubicle every morning and is showered with £50 notes to ensure he remembers what the case is about.") At up to £2,000 a day, refreshers can soon exceed the brief fee for the trial and run and run whether they speak or not. Certain defence counsel in Blue Arrow are rumoured to have collected six-figure sums, on many days for merely turning up and saying nothing.

Rambling legal prolixity complicates rather than simplifies, obfuscates rather than illuminates. But then often that is what defence in a fraud trial is all about. After all, both sides know the truth going in.

The bottom line is that Guinness One probably cost £10 to £20 million. Blue Arrow the same. Barlow Clowes probably £5 to £10 million. Guinness Two probably £1 to £5 million so far — it's cut price only because Lord Spens is on legal aid and Seelig represents himself.

Justice is also supposed to be cost effective. It is hard to see how that criterion is met when few fraudsmen go to jail for more than five years. It will be interesting to see whether Peter Clowes' sentence matches the 10 years given to Savundra in 1974, never mind the 15 years handed out by a US judge to British conman Alex Herbage in 1987. Even harder to understand is the expenditure of such massive sums on the Blue Arrow prosecution when the likelihood of a prison sentence was always remote to non-existent.

Further acquittals in the Blue Arrow case are not impossible. If so, they will raise very serious questions about not just the second Blue Arrow trial but also the future conduct of fraud trials in general, in particular where the issues revolve around arcane City practices rather than Clowes-style hands in tills. Similar questions will also be raised whether Guinness Two (where the jury were told in September they would, like First World War soldiers, be home for Christmas) continues on into the summer or beyond or (as is more likely) not.

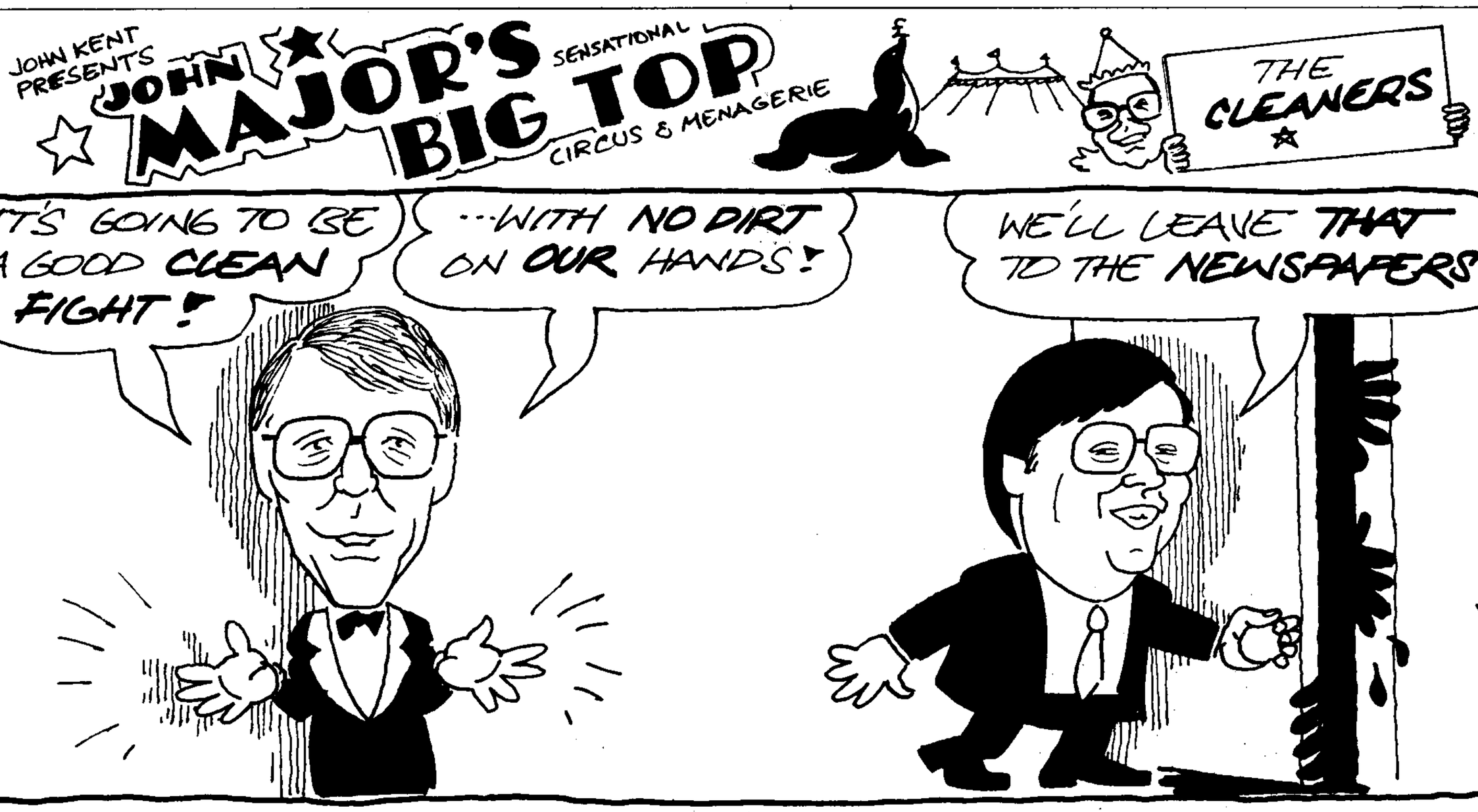
Questions also about allowing defendants to represent themselves in such complex cases just because they do not qualify for legal aid. Questions about a trial judge's right to abbreviate questioning of witnesses. Questions about whether it is just that those prepared to do their civic duty as jurors should be forced to give up so much time (often grossly underestimated at the start) and whether the unwelcome result is acceptable that the jury, instead of being of the defendants' suited peers, ends up as the unemployed, the retired or non-working women for whom the stipend is attractive.

Roskill, who as a law lord knew a thing or two about fraud, made two major recommendations which were ignored at the urging — surprise, surprise — of the legal profession. One was to remove from juries any complex fraud trial involving the Stock Exchange, networks of companies, overseas bank accounts where the concepts and language would be beyond the average juror's comprehension. Roskill considered that juries asked to listen to fraud evidence for more than 20 days could not retain all the facts necessary to come to a proper decision. He suggested instead that such cases — Blue Arrow, Guinness and Barlow Clowes (there the blatant theft for personal use made matters easier to comprehend) could all qualify — should be heard by a judge assisted by two lay experts. This was the system used for exchange control evasion prosecutions because of the complexities involved. The last major exchange control case lasted 30 days, whereas Roskill estimated it could have taken four times as long with a jury.

Equally unpopular with the lawyers was the possible creation of a fraud commission which would review the performance of everyone, from the judge to the police. Such a review body might prevent costly exercises of the sort from which only the legal fraternity benefits at the cost of the taxpayer who picks up the tab. As it is now there is no sanction for incompetence or time wasting.

The split verdicts in Barlow Clowes and those awaited in Blue Arrow and Guinness Two will impact on the future of the SFO. Unless it gets its act together and speeds up the prosecution and trial process — much needed changes to improve the performance of judges and defence barristers are for the Lord Chancellor — Barbara Mills's successor will be taking over the Serious Fiasco Office.

'Slicker'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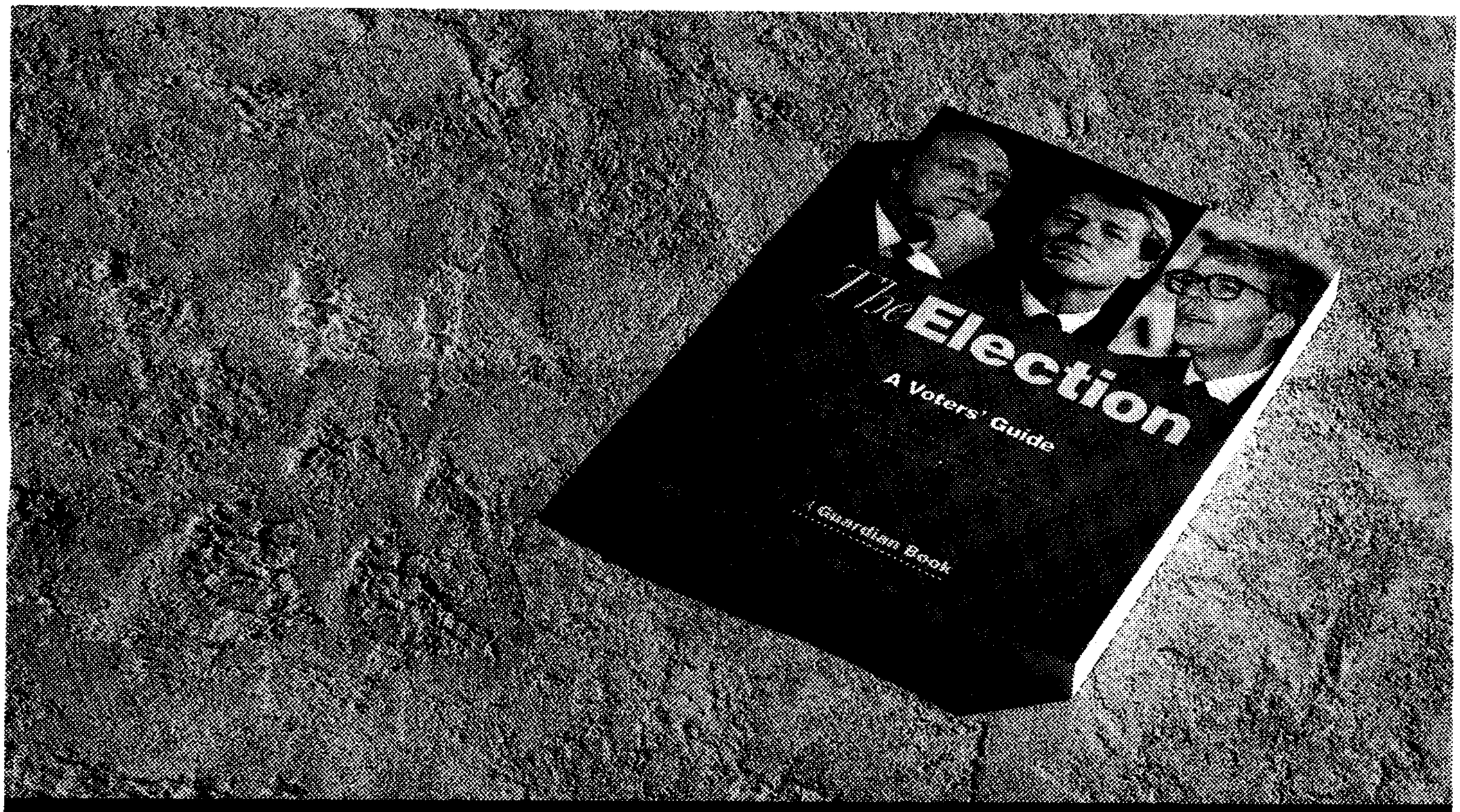

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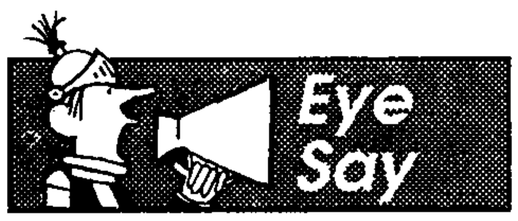

NORTH WALES murder 1976. The reconstruction Crimewatch won't show. CT.

DOMINIC. It's been great but now it's over. Brun.

LOUISEXY, It is still now. R.

TO JOHN This one really is for you! Happy 43rd birthday from the Wicked Aunt.

MORRISSEY: Who'd have thought Diggory was Whistling In The Dark. Stop jumping to the wrong conclusions. Bonita.

LONDON SURGEON call me please. BS.

TOM. Magic and wonder to the wanderers. Dare to? ROSIE.

RDP.
Happy 35th, 2/2/92, where you?
MW.

CAPITAINE, I'm thinking of "For Your Babies" (Simply Red). Love — SOUSFIFRE.

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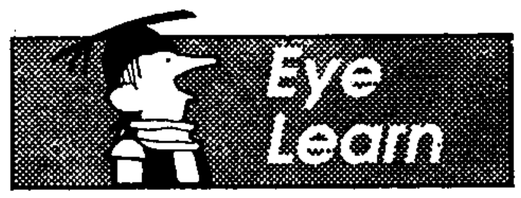

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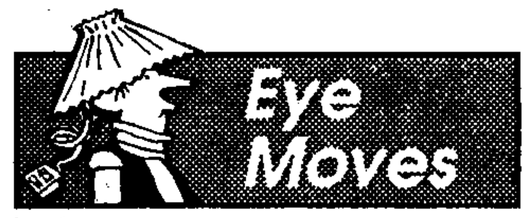

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St Valentine's Day Messages

♥ **TO RUPERT** — love you forever. From HELEN.

♥ **SHORTY** loves his LITTLE CUTIE lots and lots.

♥ **CAPITAINE,** If snowflakes were kisses... I'd send you a blizzard. All my love — SOUS-FIFRE.

♥ **KITTIWAKE!** Exquisite lover, you possess my heart. M.H.R. P.C.A.,A.A.,A.A..!

♥ **L.D.** I love you.

♥ **DEAREST MAX,** We are BOTH yours forever. THE FLOSSIES.

♥ **NANEE HAY,** wheelbarrows? Good Batman the POUCHED CRUSADER.

♥ **SYBARITIC SYRENS** smitten Odysseus once and for all. So much love. XXXX

♥ **HOUSE MEETING:** Kisses are in? Marriage is in? FB

♥ **PRETTY** — I love you muchly.

♥ **MALCOLM** You bowl me over. Love SALLY SKITTLE.

♥ **P.W.** Love you BLUE NOSE from the NIGHT NURSE.

♥ **MARTIN BUNNY...** Cannot pamplemouse without you. XXX

SID: Better than custard or Angel Delight! DORIS

♥ **IKKYCHICK.** Your jock luboos forever, and always will.

♥ **REDHEADS ARE** best. Love now and always, HONEYBUN and HANNIBAL.

♥ **IOANA BEAR.** My hope, my dream, my lover, my friend, so small and delicate, so beautiful. I love you my darling. XXX ROCKY BLONDE BEAR.

♥ **BOGSWABBER** loves SWMBO, Truly, madly, deeply.

♥ **DEAR BOX 6660** be my pumpkin forever. Love you, TIGGER.

♥ **KAREN** — Ti amo Soulmate. PAUL.

♥ **BISCUIT BARREL** loves her BUNNY.

♥ **MARTIN THE** psychologist still loves the engineer. With all my love, ANNE.

♥ **MARTIN** — ich liebe dich — more and more. A.

♥ **KKKKATIE** seeks sad wanker for slaps and kisses.

♥ **FRUITTI** be my Valentine always. Love SNUGGLES.

♥ **BALLOONS ON** the door for H, love from afar, M.

♥ **PESKY** — Love you forever. A.C.H.

♥ **TO ATTILA** the Bun. Love from the RUTTING RHINOCEROS.

♥ **PENNY** — Remember I like fish. Love you and so does he. FURBALL.

♥ **SARAH BEAR** — Still reading the SMALL ADS.

♥ **WHO IS LUCKY?** Clive and Marion got married.

♥ **PICNIC PETER,** in there, somewhere: PRUDENCE forever adores you.

♥ **ALIAKIMOO AGAPIMOO** I love you.

♥ **SQUARE:** Lots of 4 o'clock in the mornings. PORK SCRATCHING.

♥ **I HEART** the SEAMONSTERESS. By the SEAMONSTER.

♥ **THUNDERTHIGHS ARNOLD** Let your soldier pants do the talking — PINK THONGED THANG!

♥ **HEDGEHOG.** Owl will always love you.

♥ **PGC** — someone is hungry for your lurve! Time to set sail and head for JJ's Harbour soon!

♥ **DAVE** Be my Valentine 22/2/92??

♥ **TIRED TIGER** — love you lots — BEDTIME BUNNY.

♥ **SARAH BEAR** — SIMON loves you lots.

♥ **RICHARD.** Fancy lunch today? Coffee and cake on the menu. Love you very much.

♥ **OH JOY!** An Inspector calling BIG BIRD with much love.

♥ **HOPPY** — Still newlywed, love HOPPY WIFE.

♥ **LOVE YOU** ANN MADELAINE HAZZELL SYDDALL of Glastonbury, Somerset.

♥ **CHIPMUNK.** Love you always, BEASTIE. Eeek from MAD, Hello from NUTTY.

♥ **GOREZEE** Beware the angle of the dangle. JOB.

♥ **JINTY**
You gorgeous shagamuffin.
Your HUNGRY VIKING loves you.
♥

♥ **MICA,** my one sensation — don't forget which self you left me on! All my love — K.

♥ **PORTLY PIG** — mummy loves you.

♥ **SCRUMMY BEAR** — bet you thought I'd forgotten! MR.PIG.

♥ **HUGGY BEAR,** I love you even more than cheese muffins!

♥ **STALIN.** I love you/Bristol Rovers. CHIPPY.

♥ **DARLING SWEET** Adorable CLAIRE. I love you madly.

♥ **PEEBEE.** Love you TOOTS.

♥ **ADE B** is loving MUNCHKIN.

♥ **REEBOCK LOVES** her TUBLET for ever and ever.

♥ **16" SUIT** too small. You are my world. POP.

♥ **JUDE, LOVE** those buffers. MICK.

♥ **DEAR LITTLE** CHERUBS. I love you hugely. From LICKIN' FLOWER LOVEBUG. Happy gerbils!

♥ **DONNA.** All my love, STEVE.

♥ **LONDON SURGEON** I love you. B.

♥ **IT'S NOT** goodbye, more au revoir. (That's French!)

♥ **PETERKINS** — Yes you! Love you lots. D.S.R.

♥ **TO MY SEXY** WELSH PRINCESS. No more cooking oil, only body oil. Love you forever, BIG L.

♥ **ANDY, TOM,** LUCY AND ADAM love ALISON.

♥ **CATFORD JAP** to JOHN DEAR — Salmon at Verneuil this year? Or next?

♥ **HAITCH** — OLD BUILDER thinks more lessons required.

♥ **JUMBO,** Love you lots, BIRD from Hammersmith.

♥ **BIG SQUIDGE** — looking forward to Christmas in our new house! Love you lots. SUPERSQUIDGE.

♥ **VALENTINE** MINKY WOMAN raises more than eyebrow, hence BUBSPROUT WINNIT loves MINKY.

♥ **SARAH** — you're gorgeous and I love you very much. Love and snuggles. R.

♥ **SALLY** — I love you. JONATHAN.

♥ **AYESHA** — let's get together again in some faraway place.

♥ **POOH BEAR!** Happy Valentines from one cafetiere 1986 HELENA HONEY XXX ZZZ's Hic!

♥ **GEORGE AND** the Chaps. I love you.

♥ **BUMPY,** It's all velly, velly, velly, velly, velly good... Best ever in fact. Love IX♥

♥ **POPPET LOVES** great big BUCKYBALLS.

♥ **TREASURE.** Can I be your pearl?

♥ **SARAH BEAR** — Surely you don't expect more.

♥ **OKAY, THIS IS** the big one. OLLY, EICHHORN, SCHNUCK and OLSCH love OLLO, RHINE BEAR, PUCKSO and OLLIMOLL. All true!

♥ **MONTY** — I love you for all those PRIVATE EYE copies. T-PHANT.

♥ **LYDS:** 'Ere look I luvs ya coz you're me babi. SPENCE.

♥ **FLIPPER.** I love you — WEASLE.

♥ **LAMBCAKE** — Lots of wol from BOBES.

♥ **GEORGIE.** Love as always.

♥ **GUSTO.** Still Yoloveu. BUGS.

♥ **SEXY BEAST,** love you, WORM.

♥ **A.M.** am/pm, anytime.

♥ **MOOSE.** Love you dear boy — your LANDLADY.

♥ **CAPTAIN.** I love you because of the lycra underwear, not despite it! MOUSE-IN-MY-EAR.

♥ **NIGEL WOOD:** My little poppet! Thank you for a wonderful year — Florence, Paris, Croydon, Rotherhide. Love you lots, LYNNE XXXXX

♥ **SWEETIE,** I love your North, East, West and Southside.

♥ **HUGGABLE** intelligent sexy student — the cats and I love you.

♥ **AMPA-BEAR** Te amo hoy como te amaré para siempre: muchissimo. TIMMY-PIG.

♥ **BOYO.** Having a ball at Starvation Hall. Love BLODWIN.

♥ **PIGLET.** Love and banana sandwiches, POOH.

♥ **JOE,** Green on greenish (soon).

♥ **SNUGGLEKINS.** Love you, miss you, want you — CUDDLEWUMPUS.

♥ **LIZ.** S. sends love to the woman with the sheep fetish in Ramsbottom.

♥ **GIL.** "I love you", K.

♥ **P.S. LOMAX,** EDY loves you.

♥ **STEVE,** Be my Valentine! Love PAMELA. XXXXXXXXX

♥ **STUIE BUNNY** Crazy for you.

♥ **G.D.** — Truly, madly, deeply — permanently — R.S.

♥ **MARSHMALLOWS** come poor millionth!

♥ **MELON HEADSETS!** Now it's over with Joey will you be my Valentine? F.A.

♥ **PORKY PARTS** — Happy Val from JOWELLY J.B.

♥ **H&H.** Love and squeezes dearest fluffy animals. Your Mistress.

Apologies to Advertisers – the EYE LOVE column will be back next issue!

♥ **AGP** — the time has come — BBB.

♥ **A DOZEN** red noses for PINEAPPLE GIRL (and Daddies Licky Lovies!)

♥ **53 OR 19** I love every inch of you. THE CANDIDATE.

♥ **WIDDLER** The netball widower leaves lovely Lindy gasping. Love from SMUTBOX.

♥ **MABEL TOPODELINEE,** Happy Valentines Day. I love you UNCLE CHARLES.

♥ **B. STILL** Saxy after all these years. T.

♥ **RC ADORES** his CROWN PRINCESS.

♥ **TO VICKI,** Valentines love from her ENGLISH PIRATE.

♥ **E. COME AND** relax in a hot bath again, soonest. C.

♥ **A.C. IF YOU** were darkness I would lose myself in you forever. N.H.

♥ **FLOPPY DICK** missing you. All my love, and George's.

♥ **SQUIDGY** — bundles of loves, WBSS.

♥ **H — THANK YOU** for the days. MR B.

♥ **CINDERELLA** darling heart, I love you more than life itself. Please fall in love with me. BUTTONS.

♥ **PADDY A.** has a mistress a day.

♥ **PHEW!**

♥ **JPB.** Be nice to me.

♥ **ALEC** — "You really are awfully nice..." "Do you mind if I share your table?" — LAURA.

♥ **FLOWER SAYS:** Auntie Jessie was right.

♥ **BEARDS NEED NAGGING** I will always love you in spite of myself. NANCY FAN.

♥ **CHUM/MATEY:** Guardarsi la pantofola. Ho Ho Ho. LA TIGRE.

♥ **PAULINE/FERGUS** — Are you two serious? "THE WONDERFUL MOTHER".

♥ **BARTY LOVES** SARAH.

♥ **NAO CELEBRATES** close links with another SAI.

♥ **CLARESKI** love can hurt. But you don't choose love, it chooses you.

♥ **DORMOGOOSE** — You-re the chocolate round life's Easter Egg.

♥ **BARRY SHAW.** Sexy name. Sexy guy.

♥ **TO LORD GNOME'S** printer, I won't ever forget, with love from THE WANDLE.

♥ **CHIPS IN PITTA** loves DEBBIE CHIPFAT.

♥ **CLAIRE P.** It's silicon or me.

♥ **C — I WOULD** love a new passion flower.

♥ **DLMO'TB** All my love, PERCIVAL.

♥ **DUN LOVES** LADY D.

♥ **GOO-GOO-HEAD,** Valentine. We all love you. KEITH, SILAS, ALBERT and MICHAEL.

♥ **DOG-LEAD** — Fancy a shackle? HANDCUFFS.

♥ **OAB.** Has trouble with his pee.

♥ **LOVE THAT** bear — TRE

♥ **ROLEY POLEY LADY,** I'll always love you, whatever I say! R.

♥ **TO MY MOST** handsomest most wonderfulest hubby-wubby, love WIFEY.

♥ **ETH. OODLES** of undying love. SLIMY SLUG.

♥ **DEAREST VALENTINE,** belle du jour insomniac longs for "Jabberwocky" nights. Love.

♥ **SARAH.** Je t'adore, ton ami, PAUL.

♥ **LOVELY LADY,**
youngly masked;
Never, maybe,
Ever clasped.
This guy's
Two eyes
Entranced, enhanced.

♥ **ALAN. LET'S** try and make it three, love RHONDA.

♥ **BURT LOVES** momma great titties.

♥ **ROGER. I'LL** sit on you soon! Love you. ROLY POLY S!

♥ **The HEOurs** loves his WARRIOR PRINCESS.

♥ **J. ALWAYS LEAVE** room on your bike for me.

♥ **OFFICE GIRL,** switchboard + bossy cow — to pompous prick upstairs.

♥ **REMAIN DETERMINED** We will work it out-in! VVBN.

♥ **DIANE M.** No postcards. What them?

♥ **NEIL, NOW** you know, I have to, but I would have anyway. Happy VALENTINES Day, all my love, CAIT.

♥ **FLETCH 4** PERKY XXX

♥ **OH SHIT (TRAD.)** The song remains the same as time goes by — see what I mean?

♥ **GRAEME: HARE** wishes you a lovely day, but ROLAND thinks you don't deserve any Valentine cards.

♥ **WEASEL. YOUR** chicken loves you. Fur, feathers and fun at the Ilfracombe Coop.

♥ **BIBI AND** BOBI, I love you both, BOBO.

♥ **JAPANESE WOMEN** do it better, but one is best. Seven years are not enough. Bokuwa zuto Yorikoga daisuki desu.

♥ **HIPPO HIPS** — They'll never close our zoo. Huggles and snuggles, BOO. XXX

♥ **YO' HOWDY** SWEET MAMA. Ah lurve ya tootsy. Keep up the gym. CHUCKLES.

♥ **GARRY,** amour toujours, FRANCINE.

♥ **S. LOVE YOU** forever, T.

♥ **EEEB.** Will'st Cooter legal? DIK.

♥ **DON'T TEMPT** me BOBBA BERTIE — piggy piggy — love HIERONYMOUS.

♥ **HAMPSHIRE BADGER** says to SUFFOLK OTTER, it doesn't matter what the rest of the world thinks. Marry me.

♥ **GILES.** Surprise! Surprise! Love you always and forever. MANDY. XX

♥ **JEANETTE SHINES** with a magic glow./ There is no brighter star I know.

♥ **MY TINTIN** — Introspection's cure — your BIANCA.

♥ **I'LL ALWAYS** o'dale you. TG&GMAB.

♥ **DEAREST FISH DOG** Mrs Lamb's kiss, love PURV.

♥ **SUE, SO FAR** so good. Love from your personal CELEB.

♥ **FOR BIG "JR"** more than a Valentine. Lots of love. XXXX

♥ **RAINDEER.** I love yu. Trotters up. PIGLET.

♥ **SHUNA SNOW,** enchanged grotto mine — love STRANGE BEDFELLOW.

♥ **TO PUP,** all my love, PUP.

♥ **CELEB** — Lanzarotti? — Expectant S.

♥ **GLASGOW DENTIST** — let's ride off into the criess sunset together, love POPEYE.

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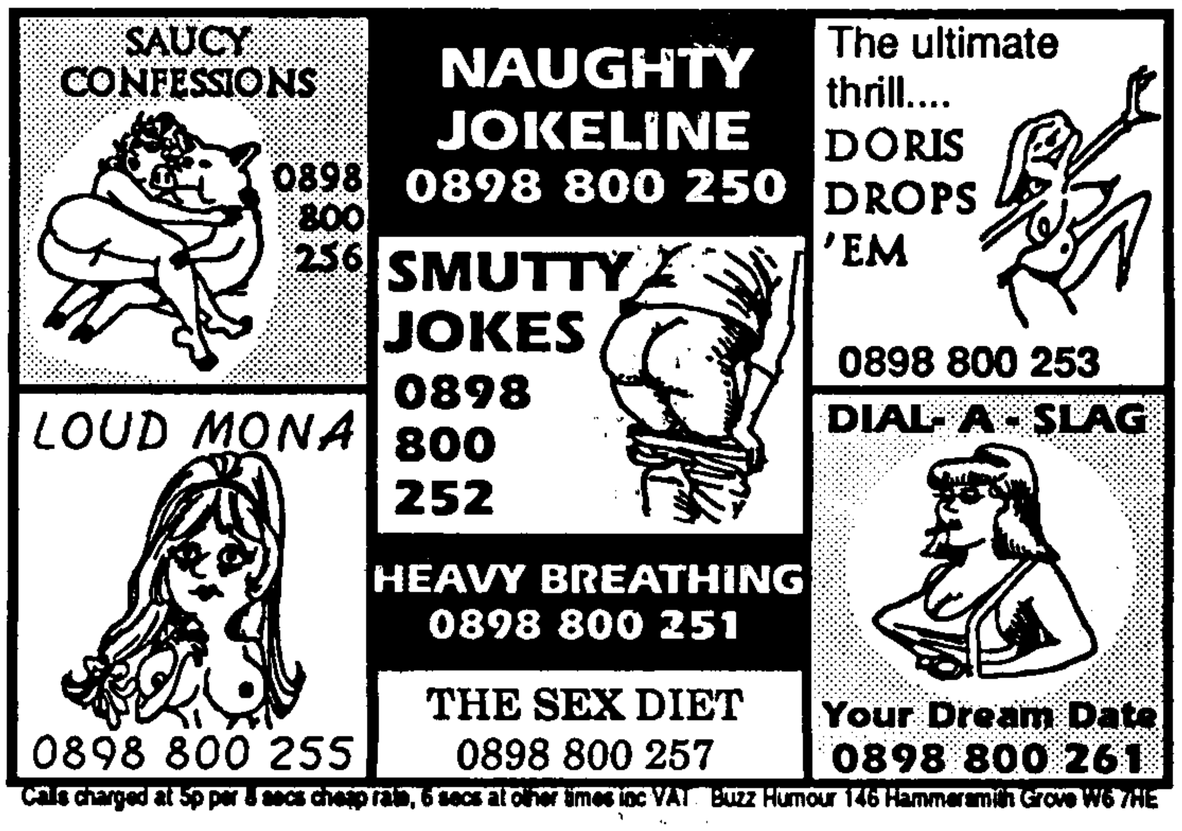

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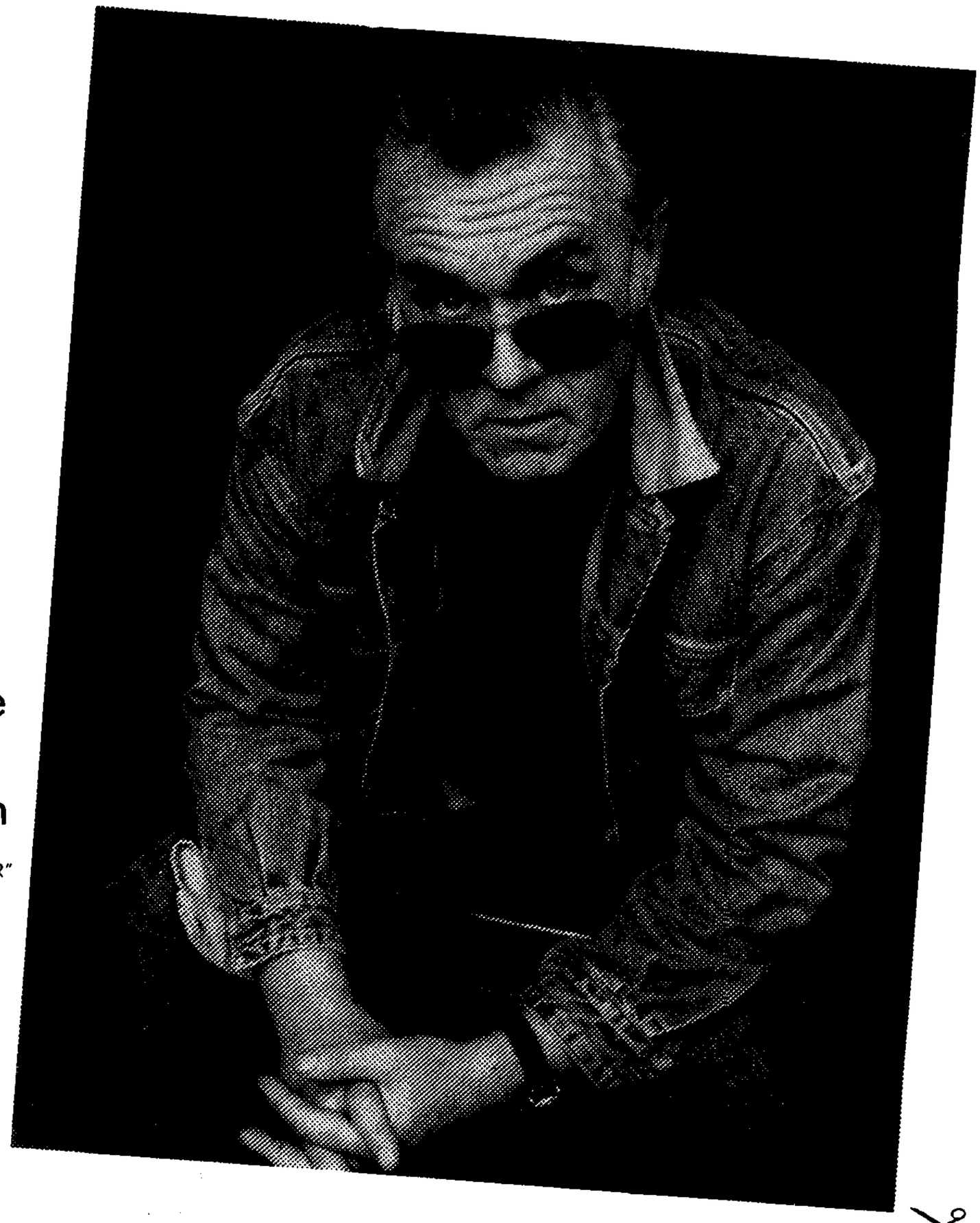

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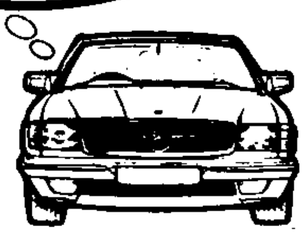

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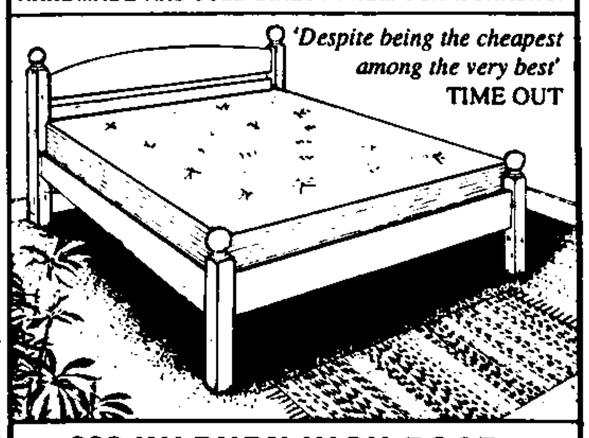

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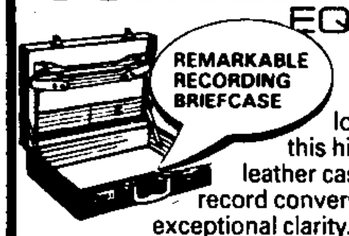

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